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EXCLUSIVE FIRST TEST

New Bentley 4x4 driven

Verdict: 'The Bentayga is the quietest, most luxurious SUV in the world'



SCOOP: NEW 5 SERIES



It's got 7 Series tech to beat Jag XF

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Audi Sport

Search R8






The all-new Audi R8. More focus, more drive.

Art by Sebastian Preschoux

Official fuel consumption figures for the all-new Audi R8 Coupé V10 range in mpg (l/100km) from: Urban 16.1 (17.5) – 16.9 (16.7), Extra Urban 30.4 (9.3) – 33.6 (8.4), Combined 23.0 (12.3) – 24.8 (11.4). CO₂ emissions: 287 – 272g/km.

Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures are obtained under standardised EU test conditions (Directive 93/116/EEC). This allows a direct comparison between different manufacturer models but may not represent the actual fuel consumption achieved in 'real world' driving conditions. Optional wheels may affect emissions and fuel consumption figures. More information is available on the Audi website at audi.co.uk and at dft.gov.uk/vca. Images used for illustrative purposes only. Car shown features optional equipment and optional Audi exclusive paint.



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Fuel consumption in MPG (l/100km) for All-New Tucson range: Urban 28.2 (10.0) – 52.3 (5.4), Extra Urban 43.5 a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results. Model shown: All-New Tucson Premium SE 2.0 CRDi with solid paint. 5 Year Unlimited Mileage Warranty terms and exclusions apply. Visit www.hyundai.co.uk/owning or ask your local dealer.



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(6.5) – 67.3 (4.2), Combined 37.2 (7.6) – 61.7 (4.6), CO₂ Emissions 177 – 119g/km. These official EU test figures are to be used as 136PS Blue Drive manual at £28,930 OTR including White Sand metallic paint at £585. *On the road price of £18,695 applies to All-New Tucson S 1.6 GDI 132PS Blue Drive manual



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COVER STORY

Bentley Bentayga driven:
Matt Prior samples the rapid, regal and really rather good luxury SUV



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Road test: Mercedes CLA Shooting Brake



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How to go racing in a Radical SR1



'With familiarity, the Ferrari F12tdf becomes a deeply rewarding thing to drive'

Matt Prior, p34



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We find out what's quickest from rest to 120mph and back



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McLaren F1s for 'just' £6 million? Bargain

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Go Further



Performance matters: our acceleration and braking shootout is back

Still measuring up, 120 years on

WHAT'S FASTEST? THE question has been mulled over by motoring enthusiasts since the dawn of the car, or at least since Autocar first went on sale in November 1895.

Performance and capability, and the measuring thereof, have always been at the heart of the motor car, although in those early days of motoring the tests were more concerned with proving a vehicle's capability at hauling loads, long-distance running and climbing hills.

The main aim was to demonstrate how this new method of transport could be superior to the trusty horse. Much to Dobbin's relief, the car proved to be a roaring success.

It was no doubt also a relief to Autocar's founder, Henry Sturmeay. His foresight in setting up the world's first journal to record the burgeoning new automotive industry established the foundations for this magazine, which is still going strong some 12 decades later.



To celebrate our 120th birthday, we've revived our 0-100-0mph straight-line speed test and given it a twist, setting 120mph as the benchmark (see what we did there?). Read the results on p40.

MATT BURT EDITOR

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AUTOCAR

AUTOCAR.CO.UK
THIS WEEK'S TOP FIVE

NEWS

Los Angeles motor show

All the best pictures from the show floor



REVIEW

Audi R8 V10 Plus

We drive Audi's 601bhp supercar in the UK



REVIEW

Mercedes-AMG A45

Can Merc's updated mega-hatch still cut it?



REVIEW

Seat Ibiza Cupra

Hot hatch gets a 189bhp engine. Is it any good?



BLOG

Matt Prior

Behind the scenes at Handling Day



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THIS WEEK

News to share? Call 020 8267 5351/5782 email tom.webster@autocar.co.uk

Design of new 5 Series will be evolutionary; on sale in UK in 2017



High-tech new 5 Series

■ BMW's new executive saloon gets multi-material platform, high-tech electronics ■ Plug-in

The new, seventh-generation BMW 5 Series has entered the final phase of engineering development and durability testing ahead of its unveiling in the second half of next year.

It's set to reach UK showrooms in early 2017 and go head to head with the upcoming new Mercedes-Benz E-Class, the Jaguar XF and the Audi A6. It will offer a broader range of powertrain options than today's record-selling model. These will include a new plug-in petrol-electric hybrid with, BMW insiders confirm, a zero-emissions range of more than 20 miles.

The decision to fit the new 5 Series with a contemporary 48-volt electrical architecture enables it to feature advanced autonomous driving systems. It can have hands-off operation up to a pre-determined speed, a sophisticated anti-collision system and fully autonomous braking, among other features.

The increasing importance of connectivity means the new 5 Series will be equipped with a fifth-generation iDrive system, as used by the new 7 Series. It supports new touchpad and touchscreen functions, allowing you to operate the various features in a similar style to that of a smartphone,

with familiar pinch, point and swipe commands, or alternatively via an updated rotary dial mounted on the car's broad centre console.

The new model will also offer optional gesture control, with a three-dimensional sensor mounted within the headlining to detect up to five different hand movements. BMW will also make available its latest voice recognition system, providing the new iDrive system with four different operating options in total.

As with today's six-year-old model, the new 5 Series will be produced in three distinct bodystyles: saloon

(codenamed G30), Touring (G31) and GT (G32). The GT will continue to feature a large liftback but in what one high-ranking BMW insider has described to Autocar as a "much more elegant form".

The saloon is scheduled to make its public debut at the Paris motor show during the third quarter of 2016.

Dates for the launch of the Touring and GT are yet to be finalised, although sources with knowledge of the planned production schedule suggest they will appear at the Geneva and Frankfurt shows in 2017.

Recent prototypes photographed testing on public roads in Germany reveal that the new 5 Series

A 48-volt set-up enables it to feature advanced autonomous driving tech

AUTOCAR
IMAGE

for 2016

hybrid joins line-up ■ New M5 in 2017

has gained an evolutionary exterior styling update, with cues lifted from the Pininfarina Gran Lusso Coupé concept car first shown at the 2013 Villa d'Este Concours d'Elegance in Italy. Its traditional three-box silhouette is retained. However, a more heavily raked rear window and sloping boot deck provide it with a sleeker profile and more shapely rear end than today's model.

As part of efforts to significantly improve its aerodynamics, the new 5 Series adopts a more prominent kidney grille with louvres that open when the engine requires cooling and

close again to improve airflow around the front end. The headlights, available with optional lasers for the high-beam function, also extend into the chrome surround of the grille in a bid to provide the car with greater visual width.

Along the flanks, there is a more pronounced shoulder, added tumblehome to the glass area and an air breather element behind the front wheel arches. The rear gets a shapely new C-pillar treatment, OLED tail-lights and, on the more upmarket models, tailpipes set within the lower section of the bumper. As with the 7 Series, BMW plans five styling →



MATT SAUNDERS

What the new 5 Series must do to beat Jag's XF

THE FIRST THING the new 5 Series will need to do is return BMW to the top of its class for fuel economy and emissions. The current car's engines remain objectively competitive and subjectively very strong, but BMW buyers expect nothing short of class-leading company car tax liability. The new car's significant weight loss and nine-speed auto gearbox should deliver on that front.

On quality, practicality, technology and cool-headed rational appeal, the 5 Series' standards are already high, so any gains

here will only consolidate outstanding selling points. An even more spacious cabin, fitted out with the 7 Series' excellent infotainment systems, will win the car a great many fans.

But to dethrone Jaguar's excellent new XF in Autocar's estimations, the new 5 Series will have to show greater warmth of character than its predecessor – and crisper, more delicate handling and a more fluent ride.

The inertness of the current BMW's steering and initial looseness of its close body control were disappointments when the car faced the XF on these pages a few weeks ago.

But if BMW can integrate its latest active chassis and steering systems as discreetly as it did on the 7 Series and give the new 5 Series a dash more dynamic piquancy than its bigger brother, it will be on a winning trajectory.



← packages for the new 5 Series: Standard, Sport, Pure Excellence, M Sport and Individual.

Underpinning the car is an advanced new platform codenamed OKL (Oberklasse, or 'luxury class'). First used by the new 7 Series, it has been conceived around a combination of materials, including carbonfibre, aluminium, magnesium and high-strength steel. The new 5 Series will shed up to 100kg compared with today's model, which is a claimed 1595kg in its lightest form, the 520i.

The interior adopts a new-look dashboard that features high-resolution digital instruments and a free-standing infotainment monitor. The design is similar to that in the latest 7 Series, with the same basic architecture, multi-function steering wheel, switchgear and materials.

The subtle increase in external dimensions is reflected inside, with added

accommodation both front and rear. BMW has placed great emphasis on improving the comfort and refinement of the 5 Series. New seats with softer cushioning are used up front. The bodyside also receives new sound-deadening material.

From the outset of UK sales in early 2017, the engine line-up will include various versions of BMW's latest B47 diesel and B48 petrol four-cylinder units – all in 2.0-litre form, as with today's model.

They will be joined by BMW's recently unveiled B57 diesel and B58 petrol six-cylinder engines, which also use a standardised 500cc individual cylinder capacity for an overall volume of 3.0 litres.

The new 5 Series is also earmarked to receive a newly upgraded 444bhp 4.4-litre V8 petrol engine, recently launched in the 750i.

Other engine options will include a quad-turbocharged version of the new six-cylinder B57 diesel, which will be a

successor to the M550d. Set to replace the existing tri-turbo N57 engine, this advanced 3.0-litre unit is said to adopt electrically driven turbos to bolster reserves beyond the already stout 376bhp and 545lb ft of today's model.

BMW also plans to offer the new 5 Series with the plug-in petrol-electric powertrain used in the 330e, 740e and X5 xDrive40e. The hybrid set-up mates a 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol engine with an electric motor mounted within the gearbox and a lithium ion battery sited in the floor of the boot to provide an electric-only range of more than 20 miles.

The new 5 Series flagship will be the M5. Set to offer a choice between rear-wheel drive and optional four-wheel drive for the first time, it is tentatively due to be unveiled at the 2017 Geneva motor show. It will feature a developed version of the 4.4-litre V8 petrol engine.

Standard 5 Series models will receive either a standard six-speed manual gearbox or a new nine-speed automatic. The M5 will continue with a seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission. As with the new M5, some models will be offered with the choice of rear or optional four-wheel drive.

GREG KABLE

The new M5 will be offered with rear-wheel drive and optional four-wheel drive

SPY SHOTS
BMW 5 SERIES



Next Mercedes E-Class is set to be bigger than the current model



All-new Merc

MOST OF THE NEW BMW 5 Series' rivals will have been replaced or refreshed relatively recently by the time the car is unveiled late next year.

Of the BMW's rivals, the Mercedes-Benz E-Class is the next to be replaced, with the new version due to make its debut at the Detroit motor show next January. It will have a new generation of four-cylinder diesel engines, codenamed OM654, and new six-cylinder engines will follow later in the year. A plug-in hybrid is due within 12 months.

The new E-Class is set to follow the recently launched C-Class in the styling department, with two

different front end looks: a traditional chrome grille and a more sporty look.

The new-generation model, codenamed W213, adopts the modular MRA platform used by the latest C-Class and S-Class. Insiders confirm the new E-Class will grow to about 4950mm long and 1940mm wide.

A new Jaguar XF has just been launched and is the current benchmark in the sector. It's larger and lighter than before and has a CO₂ output as low as 104g/km.

A new estate version is set to join the XF range within the next year and potent SVR versions are set to follow.

A refreshed version of the Lexus GS was shown at



E-Class heads 5 Series' rivals

the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in California earlier this year. The model revealed there, a petrol GS200t, will not be coming to the UK, although hybrid versions of the tweaked saloon are set to be offered here next year.

The next generation of the Audi A6 (previewed right) isn't due until 2017, but the Prologue concept at the 2014 Los Angeles motor show gave an indication of how it will look. It will share its looks with the next A7 and A8 and will have more space inside than the existing version.

The new A6 will come with a fresh range of V6 and V8 petrol and diesel engines, in addition to the entry-level four-cylinder units.



Next-generation Audi A6 isn't due until 2017

Audi dipped its toe in the hybrid water with the A3 e-tron



Audi plots move to mild

New electric motor tech paves the way for advanced petrol hybrid powertrain solutions, due in 2017

Audi is betting on the electrification of its future cars to improve real-world economy and reduce exhaust pollution, company bosses have told Autocar. The move will also allow the company to usher in some highly advanced suspension innovations as well as providing a degree of autonomy that goes beyond simple driving assistance.

This shift towards 'mild hybrid' systems and more conventional plug-in hybrids should also result in Audi's future line-up moving away from diesel engines, particularly across the company's smaller models, including the A1, A3 and A4.

Moving to petrol hybrid engines will also allow Audi to exploit its new 'predictive efficiency assistant'

technology, which uses mapping information and live traffic reports to automatically switch between power sources, as well as taking advantage of downhill stretches of road to 'coast' the engine (see sidebar).

The key to Audi's move is the adoption of Integrated Starter Generators (ISG). These are large electric motors that act as the starter motor and alternator but can also assist the engine by sending torque through the drive belt to the engine's crankshaft. The system is also fitted with a small lithium ion battery.

Audi has developed an ISG that works on an ordinary 12V electrical system, so it could be fitted to today's A1 and A3 models. The company says the system allows the stop-start system to cut in below 9mph and also allows the

engine to coast at high speeds, both significant fuel saving measures. The first production version is expected in 2017.

Today's A3 1.4 TSI Ultra has a claimed economy figure of 60mpg, but the 12V ISG system would push that up to 65mpg. However, the combination of coasting and energy recuperation under braking could see the real-world economy of the ISG-equipped engine rise even higher than the lab figures suggest.

Audi is also planning to introduce a more powerful 48V ISG system, the first of which will be revealed before the end of the year, using a combined 12V and 48V set-up.

The 48V system allows for a much more powerful ISG (up from 1.5bhp to 16bhp) and periods of engine coasting of up to 30 seconds.



Finely adjustable eROT dampers generate their own electricity

However, the introduction of full-scale 48V electronics into future models from 2017 will also allow Audi to introduce electrically driven engine compressors, which will come in two forms. Firstly, otherwise conventional turbochargers that are spun up by an electric motor will be able to provide boost even at very low crankshaft speeds.

The second type, as already seen on the RS5 Competition concept, is a separate electric compressor motor that forces air into the turbochargers at low engine speeds but can also eliminate turbo lag during higher-speed driving.

This 48V electrical system has also allowed Audi to develop three new suspension concepts, which capitalise on



hybrids

the fact that the 48V system provides as much as four times as much power as a 12V set-up.

First to arrive will be an active anti-roll bar system that uses planetary gears driven by small electric motors to couple and uncouple the roll bars individually from the chassis.

Uncoupled, the anti-roll bars will allow a more comfortable ride, but when active, Audi claims reduced understeer, less roll in corners and increased lateral acceleration. However, the anti-roll bars' twisting when locked allows the small electric motors to act as generators and create enough charge on a "moderate bumpy road" to power the whole system.

Further away from production are the eROT electromechanical dampers. These compact, barrel-shaped dampers are about

10cm across and 15cm deep and are intended to replace conventional upright hydraulic dampers. They are connected to a lever arm which, through a series of gears, feeds the forces into an electric motor.

Not only do the eROT units save a great deal of space, but the rebound and compression damping rates can also be set in very fine increments independently of each other. The agitation of the dampers creates an electrical charge, and the rougher the road, the greater the amount of electricity generated.

Audi claims that these dampers could reduce a car's average CO₂ emissions by as much as 3g/km.

HILTON HOLLOWAY

Audi Q7 e-tron quattro first drive p37

We drive Audi's hydrogen-fuelled A7



AUDI HAS RECENTLY allowed Autocar to sample its hydrogen-powered A7 fuel cell prototype.

The A7 h-tron is powered by a fuel cell stack, backed up by an 8.8kWh lithium battery. Hydrogen storage tanks are mounted in the centre tunnel and in front and behind the rear axle.

Drive goes to all four wheels, with two electric

motors on each axle. Each motor produces a claimed 85bhp and 199lb ft.

The interior of the h-tron is almost identical to that of the production A7. Once moving, it is nearly silent, with the distant hum of the air blower force-feeding the fuel cell stack being the only mechanical noise that penetrates the cabin.

As you might expect,

the A7 h-tron is brisk, very smooth and well balanced. The latter is thanks to the drivetrain components being distributed along the length of the car, as well as the all-wheel drive operation.

It's not as furiously rapid as a Tesla Model S, but the h-tron demonstrates that hydrogen power for upmarket cars is closer than you might think. **HH**



The h-tron's cabin is shared with the standard A7; fuel cell converts hydrogen into electricity

Audi's autonomous powertrain tech

AUDI'S DRIVE TOWARDS hybrids and electrification is part of a big move towards autonomous powertrain management. 'Predictive efficiency assistant' is being launched on the Q7 e-tron, due in the UK next March.

The system uses 3D information from the satellite navigation and live traffic information, which it picks up over the internet. Once the driver has entered the chosen destination in the sat-nav, the new software

takes over control of the hybrid powertrain.

It calculates when to use the internal combustion engine, when to deploy both the engine and electric motor, when to run on the battery alone and when the battery charge needs to be preserved for use later in the journey. It even advises the driver when to coast in order to save fuel.

Audi's engineers believe that this autonomous control of the hybrid powertrain will maximise economy and allow future models to drive through towns and villages in zero-emissions mode. Real-world fuel economy should also be markedly improved.





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OFFICIAL PICTURES 

Hybrid Kia Niro is a 'Prius SUV'

This Kia Niro hybrid will be launched as a high-riding, SUV-like rival to the Toyota Prius next autumn – and kick-start the firm's plans to nearly triple the number of electrified vehicles it has on sale from four to 11 by 2020.

The Niro sits between the Kia Soul and Kia Sportage in size and is described by its makers as a Hybrid Utility Vehicle (HUV) rather than an SUV, because they believe it will be unique in the market. Kia claims the Niro blends the appeal and practicality of a Nissan Qashqai with the efficiency of the Prius.

Surprisingly, given the standout designs of the Prius and Qashqai, Kia claims the Niro's "modern styling will help the car stand out in a traditionally conservative sector". Although its looks clearly draw on those of the Sportage, it sits on a bespoke platform developed for use by parent firm Hyundai for hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles.

Key design details include a relatively wide stance, which, Kia says, conveys "stability and a low centre of gravity", and a long wheelbase, which reduces the front and rear overhangs for a more dynamic look, while

also allowing for maximised interior space.

The Niro will be offered as a hybrid only. It will use Kia's 104bhp 1.6-litre Kappa petrol engine, with 108lb ft of torque. This will be mated to a 32kW electric motor, putting power through a six-speed DCT gearbox and using a 1.56kWh lithium polymer battery. Kia has targeted CO₂ emissions of less than 90g/km (equating to around 70mpg) and says a plug-in powertrain will be offered later in the car's lifecycle. Although it will be front drive to start with, four-wheel drive is a possibility.

Unconfirmed reports suggest Kia will unveil the Niro at the Chicago motor show next February rather than the Detroit motor show in January. It will be produced from the autumn at Kia's Hwasung plant in Korea and is expected to go on sale soon after.

Although the Niro takes its name from a concept car shown at the Frankfurt motor show in 2013, it is not related to that vehicle, which was a small SUV. That car is set to make production under a different name in 2017 as a rival to the Nissan Juke.

JIM HOLDER

What's the Niro like to drive?

SPY SHOT

KIA NIRO



UNDERNEATH THAT cladding lies the Kia Niro. It is described by its maker as a cross between the practicality and styling of the Nissan Qashqai, Renault Kadjar and Volkswagen Tiguan and the economy and image of the Toyota Prius. As such, Kia insists, it has no rivals, although it looks very much like a jacked-up soft-roader to us.

In size, it is an eco-friendly rival to the Ford C-Max.

What's clear from this short first chance to drive the prototype Niro is that it will likely deliver all of

the usual Kia standards.

Most of the time, the powertrain is smooth, with the electric motor delivering a noticeable and linear level of boost. Only when you want to push really hard do the revs rise and the hushed cabin ambience gets disturbed by an unseemly thrashing of the petrol engine – although Kia is still working on final calibrations.

In particular, the dual-clutch automatic gearbox works well. It's rarely caught out and generally shifts early to avoid the over-revving that's typical of a car fitted

with a continuously variable transmission (CVT).

On bumpy Korean roads, the Niro rides well and corners flatly, and the steering is accurate if not overly feelsome. There is nothing sporty about this car and the weight of the batteries is noticeable if you press on, but it is perfectly capable.

The disguised cabin looked smart where we could see it, and space in the front, back and boot is decent. Certainly, the SUV-like bodystyle will win fans over the Prius's divisive looks and shape. **JH**

KIA PLANS NEW HYDROGEN CAR

A bespoke, mass-produced hydrogen-powered Kia model will go on sale globally within five years, as the firm bids to reduce its average fleet CO₂ emissions by 25% from 2014 levels by 2020. It is likely to be paired with a similar Hyundai model.



AUTONOMOUS KIA DUE BY 2030

Kia will invest £1.3 billion by 2018 in order to launch advanced driver assist technology by 2020, building to the introduction of its first fully autonomous vehicle by 2030. The projects will be jointly developed with parent firm Hyundai.





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WHATCAR?

**Car of the
Year 2015**
Best small car

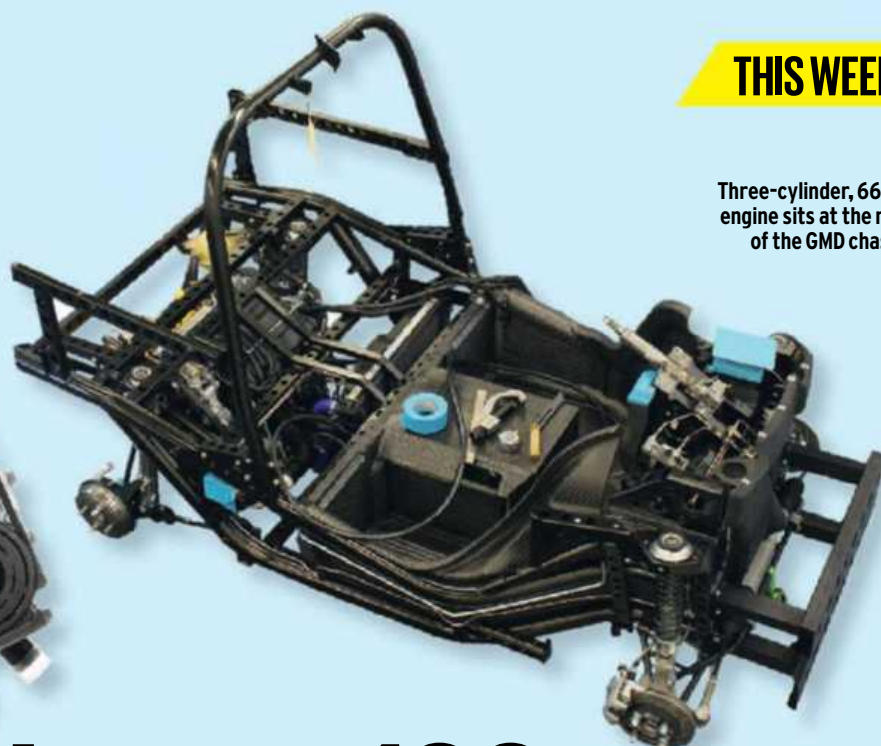
WHATCAR?

**Car of the
Year 2015**
Overall winner

*At the end of the agreement there are three options: i) own the vehicle: pay the optional final payment; ii) return the vehicle: subject to fair wear and tear, charges may apply; or iii) replace: part exchange the vehicle.

Available on Solutions Personal Contract Plan with deposits from 0-30%. To achieve the monthly payment advertised, a £4393.10 deposit is required. Deposit shown may be higher than the minimum; a lower deposit will result in increased monthly payments. Based on a 42 month, 10,000 miles per annum agreement, 18s and over. Subject to availability. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. Excess mileage charges of 4.4p per mile apply. Offer available when ordered by 31st December 2015 from participating Retailers. Offers are not available in conjunction with any other offer and may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Accurate at time of publication [11/2015]. Freepost ŠKODA Financial Services. Model shown is ŠKODA Fabia Hatch Monte Carlo 1.0 MPI. Total OTR price is £14,645. Model shown is not UK specification.

Official fuel consumption for the Fabia Hatch range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 46.3 (6.1) - 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2) - 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) - 83.1 (3.4). CO₂ emissions for the Fabia range are 110 - 88 g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Our CO₂ and consumption values are provisional and are currently under review. Revised values will be published if necessary.



Three-cylinder, 660cc engine sits at the rear of the GMD chassis

Shell's car chases 100mpg

Gordon Murray and ex-F1 engine designer collaborate with Shell on lightweight three-seat city car

Oil giant Shell is targeting fuel economy of 100mpg from the lightweight three-seat city car it is building in collaboration with Gordon Murray Design (GMD) and former Honda Formula 1 engine designer Osamu Goto.

Project M is a 1+2-seat design that aims to inspire fresh ideas on simple global cars for congested urban areas. The car has its roots in Murray's new-era T25 urban car, first revealed in 2010, which underwent a "complete rethink from the ground up" for this project.

It uses an ultra-compact rear-engined layout, utilising the principles of Murray's unique iStream manufacturing process, which employs a

simply fabricated tubular steel frame with strategically bonded-in composite panels to deliver low weight and immense strength without the complexity and inflexibility of the stamped steel components that are the basis of most cars.

It is expected that the three-seat vehicle will weigh less than 600kg. The engine is a version of the three-cylinder 660cc Mitsubishi-derived petrol unit used in the original T25. It has been thoroughly overhauled by Goto's Geo Technology

company, which brought to bear its experience in reducing friction in motor racing engines.

Due to the light weight and comparatively low drag of the tall but narrow GMD chassis, Geo Technology deemed the engine's standard performance to be more than Project M required. So it reduced the engine speed of the base unit, which in turn helped to minimise internal friction.

The engine now produces about 47bhp at 5500rpm and the car is capable of a top speed of just over 70mph. Shell has developed low-viscosity lubricants specifically for the project to highlight the importance of integrating them into the initial design of a car and engine.

The car is now undergoing testing ahead of its unveiling in the first half of next year, but it is unlikely to make production. Shell Lubricants innovation technology manager Robert Mainwaring said: "There is no intention to bring it to market. It is a 'capability analysis' vehicle."

A nominal price of £10,000 has been set for the car, and assuming the 100mpg target is achieved and a litre of petrol costs £1.16, Shell calculates the cost per mile would be 5.42 pence. Although an electric car can eclipse that, the Project M partners believe their car's low price would make it depreciate less, retaining £3500 of its value after four years.

MATT BURT



Robert Mainwaring from Shell: "It is a 'capability analysis' vehicle"

BMW's high-tech 706mpg prototype uncovered

A SECRET NEW high-tech BMW prototype has been uncovered in a series of patent register images, providing clues to developments that future models from the firm's i brand are likely to adopt.

The leaked images, lodged at the Shanghai patent register office in China earlier this year and used to inform our image (right), reveal a new wind-cheating plug-in petrol-electric hybrid research vehicle that was constructed at BMW's R&D centre in Munich, Germany.

Described by an insider as the answer to the Volkswagen

XL1, the secret four-seat prototype uses carbonfibre-reinforced plastic for its main structure, outer panels, various interior elements and rims.

Sources involved in BMW's research activities suggest the car weighs less than 1150kg – about 135kg lighter than the i3 but 355kg heavier than the XL1.

BMW engineers have also honed the aerodynamics of the new car, which has a drag coefficient of just 0.18.

Helping it to achieve that aero figure is an exterior that goes without exterior mirrors. In their place are video

cameras, which capture images that appear within a monitor mounted in the place of the traditional rear-view mirror.

Power comes via a front-mounted turbocharged 1.0-litre twin-cylinder petrol engine, based on the modular architecture of BMW's larger three, four and six-cylinder units, in combination with an electric motor sited at the rear.

It is claimed to cover 0-62mph in less than 7.0sec, hit a top speed of 112mph, return a remarkable 706mpg and have average CO₂ emissions of less than 10g/km.





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Official fuel consumption for the Yeti range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 37.7 (7.5) - 53.3 (5.3), Extra Urban 50.4 (5.6) - 68.9 (4.1), Combined 44.8 (6.3) - 62.8 (4.5). CO₂ emissions for Yeti range are 147 - 118g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Our CO₂ and consumption values are provisional and are currently under review. Revised values will be published if necessary.

Confidential

LAND ROVER HAS put in an additional chassis rotisserie on its production line in order to ease a bottleneck caused by the rise in demand for the Defender in the model's final year. The rotisserie allows the chassis to be rotated during the assembly of the suspension, brakes and other chassis components.

HYUNDAI SAYS IT'S now theoretically possible to manufacture fuel cell models in volume and sell them profitably for the same price as a petrol model. However, it adds that the infrastructure needs to be there to generate the volume first.



DON'T EXPECT ANY extra performance for the Mazda MX-5. R&D boss Kiyoshi Fujiwara was emphatic in answering a question about whether or not a more powerful variant was planned. "I don't want to add a high-performance engine to the MX-5," he said.

NISSAN'S PRODUCT planning chief, Philippe Klein, has said crossovers like the Qashqai, Juke and Gripz concept are not the firm's only innovation tools. "It's part of the success," he said, "but zero-emissions vehicles are also part of it. Safety technology through our Safety Shield is also a part of our innovation."

WHITE HAS JOINED black and grey as the most popular choices of car colour globally. This, according to Seat colour and trim engineer Carol Gomez, is because of the huge popularity of technology company Apple. "Now, people associate white with cutting-edge technology, and that has translated into the car market," Gomez said.



LP580-2 has revised air intakes to boost front downforce

OFFICIAL PICTURES

Huracán goes rear drive

Rear-drive-only Huracán LP580-2 promises to be the purest Lamborghini yet

Lamborghini has unveiled a new rear-wheel-drive version of its Huracán, the LP580-2, on the eve of the Los Angeles motor show.

The Huracán LP580-2 has a slightly detuned version of the four-wheel-drive car's 5.2-litre V10 engine, now producing 571bhp instead of 602bhp. However, the new model's dry weight is 1389kg, 33kg less than the LP610-4's, and it takes just 0.2sec longer to reach 62mph from rest, at 3.4sec. Top speed is 199mph.

There are visual differences between the LP580-2 and the LP610-4. The new model gets revised front and rear styling,

with air intakes designed to increase downforce on the front axle, along with new 19in and 20in 'Kari' wheels. Pirelli has developed bespoke P Zero tyres for the rear-drive model.

The V10 has a recalibrated ECU map to produce 384lb ft – again, a slight reduction from the four-wheel-drive car's figure – but 75% of this torque is available at 1000rpm.

The new car's weight distribution is 40/60% front to rear, and Lamborghini says the selectable driving modes – Strada, Sport and Corsa – are "tuned to provide oversteering characteristics". This could

address widespread criticism of the four-wheel-drive car's ultra-stable handling set-up.

Unlike the previous rear-drive Gallardo LP550-2, which was offered with a six-speed manual gearbox, the Huracán LP580-2 has a seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission.

It will become the cleanest model in Lamborghini's line-up, with combined fuel economy of 23.7mpg and a CO₂ output of 278g/km (down from 290g/km on the LP610-4).

Lamborghini boss Stephan Winkelmann said: "The rear-wheel-drive model fits

perfectly into our Huracán family. It's the purest expression of a Lamborghini to date, and a serious car for serious drivers."

No UK prices have been announced, but the quoted figure of €150,000 plus taxes means that the LP580-2 is likely to be slightly more affordable than the £180,000 LP610-4 – and that could make it up to £10,000 cheaper than a Ferrari 488 GTB.

An open-topped Spyder version is a near certainty, although Lamborghini sources have given no clues about when it could appear. **JOHN McILROY**

Porsche readies new turbo flat fours

PORSCHE IS PREPARING to return four-cylinder power to its sports car line-up for the first time since the 968 ceased production in 1995. The new four-pot will appear in facelifted versions of the Boxster and Cayman, which are set to be unveiled at the Geneva show next March.

The new turbocharged four-cylinder engine will be used by the Boxster and Cayman in place of the existing naturally aspirated six-cylinder engine.

Details remain scarce, but insiders have revealed that the new turbo engine shares its horizontally opposed

design and crucial elements of its architecture, including its 500cc individual cylinder capacity, with the larger twin-turbo 3.0-litre six recently unveiled in the facelifted 911. This indicates that early variants of the new flat four will be around 2.0 litres.

The new engine is expected to exceed the 271bhp and 214lb ft outputs of the existing six-cylinder unit in its initial state of tune, with hotter versions due later.

Caught here in final testing, the facelifted Cayman has new bumper designs and updated headlight and tail-light graphics.

SPY SHOT
PORSCHE CAYMAN



NEW TRIM LEVELS FOR DISCO

The Land Rover Discovery has two new run-out specification levels, Landmark and Graphite, with each featuring a combination of bespoke interior and exterior styling updates. Landmark costs £55,995 and Graphite is £47,495.



QX30 MAKES ITS DEBUT IN LA

The Infiniti QX30 has been launched at the LA show. The rival to the BMW X3 and Audi Q3 is set to go on sale in mid-2016. It will have all-wheel drive as standard and a choice of 168bhp 2.2-litre diesel or 208bhp 2.0-litre petrol engines.





Beetle Dune here next year

Raised ride height and chunky off-road looks for Volkswagen's front-wheel-drive-only Beetle variant

Volkswagen has revealed the production version of the Beetle Dune, in both hatchback and cabriolet bodystyles, at the Los Angeles motor show.

The Beetle Dune receives more rugged styling, increased ride height and larger wheels and tyres than standard versions of the second-generation modern-day Beetle.

Yet despite the looks, the new model will be sold exclusively with front-wheel drive, due to the lack of a four-wheel drive option for

the model, which is produced at Volkswagen's Puebla plant in Mexico.

Among the styling changes is a reworked front bumper featuring a prominent trapezoidal-shaped central air duct, a silver plastic skid plate and an additional air duct below the leading edge of the bonnet, along with revised indicator units and round foglights set within black plastic elements on either side of the bumper.

Further back, the Beetle Dune sports black plastic cladding within the wheel

houses, serving to increase the body's width by 14mm. There are also more prominent sills, decals along the lower sections of the doors and rear wings and new 18in wheels shod with 235/45 tyres.

The rear is distinguished from the standard Beetle by a spoiler mounted below the rear window, unique LED tail-light graphics and a uniquely styled bumper featuring a silver plastic kick plate.

Volkswagen has introduced respective 6mm and 7mm increases to the front and

rear tracks. The ride height has also been bumped up by 10mm, providing the Dune with greater ground clearance than the standard Beetle.

Inside, features including the main dashboard panel, stitching on the seats and various control surrounds are finished in the same colour as the exterior.

The Beetle Dune will be sold in the UK with the choice of five engines. Included are 103bhp 1.2, 148bhp 1.4 and 217bhp 2.0-litre petrol units, along with 109bhp 1.6 and 148bhp

2.0-litre diesels, all carried over from the standard Beetle. Gearbox choices include a six-speed manual and an optional six or seven-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission.

Pricing is yet to be revealed, although the Dune is expected to command a premium over the equivalent standard Beetle, which starts at £16,275 in hatch form and rises to £26,345 in its most comprehensively equipped cabriolet guise. It is set to go on sale early next year.

GREG KABLE

Fresh face and new chassis tech for revised SL

THE MERCEDES-BENZ SL has been updated for 2016, with a selection of visual and technical changes.

The two-seat convertible gets minor styling updates designed to bring it into line

with the rest of the current Mercedes-Benz range and in particular the Mercedes-AMG GT sports car.

The front features a larger diamond radiator grille, while LED lights are now fitted as

standard. The front bumper and bonnet are both new, with larger front air intakes and a more widespread use of chrome detailing.

The engine range remains largely unchanged, with the same SL400, SL500, AMG SL63 and AMG SL65 line-up as before. The SL400 receives a 35bhp boost in power, with the engine now offering outputs of 362bhp and 369lb ft. This results in a slight improvement to performance, with 0-62mph coming in 4.9sec. Top speed remains limited to 155mph.

The 449bhp SL500 remains unchanged, as do the 577bhp SL63 and the 621bhp V12 SL65. All versions now come with a nine-speed automatic transmission as standard.

The revised SL is now available with the Curve function, which aims to reduce body roll through corners, that has previously been offered on the larger S-Class Coupé. It also offers the Dynamic Select system, which allows the driver to choose different suspension settings from Comfort

through to a stiffer and sportier option in the new Sport+ mode.

Pricing for the 2016 SL has not yet been revealed, but it is expected to come down notably from the £73,575 starting point of the current model to significantly less than £70,000. Mercedes has not confirmed the specification changes that will make this possible, but they are set to be revealed at the same time as the pricing, which will be announced in January. First cars will be delivered around April.





Best hot hatch goes to the polls

THE PERFORMANCE Car Show, presented by Landsail Tyres in association with Autocar and PistonHeads.com, is setting out to name the world's best hot hatch.

The show, which is due to take place at the NEC in Birmingham in January, will include a centrepiece, called Hot Hatch Nirvana, that will feature cars voted for by fans. A poll launches today (Wednesday) to decide which 10 hot hatchbacks will form the basis of the display.

Fans will be able to vote for their favourite by choosing from a long list that has been curated by a panel of experts that includes Autocar's editor-in-chief, Steve Cropley, and

head of video and features, Matt Prior.

The list of candidates features a mixture of contemporary and classic models, such as the Mk1 Volkswagen Golf GTI, Renault 5 Turbo, Peugeot 205 GTI, Ford Escort RS Cosworth, Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Honda Civic Type R, Mercedes-Benz A45 AMG and Audi RS3.

The show will also be playing host to a selection of the rarest and most desirable hypercars and supercars currently on sale.

The full list can be seen online at performancecarshow.com/hothatchnirvana. Top 10 and the overall winner will be announced at the show on 14-17 January.



Elise Sports coming

THE LOTUS ELISE Sport and Sport 220 are set to join the two-seat sports car's line-up, with the two models replacing the outgoing Elise and Elise S.

The two models, which mark the return of the Sport name to a Lotus, get a weight reduction of 10kg, which doesn't improve performance but does bring a marginal boost in claimed fuel economy.

Both cars come with lightweight sports seats, which

are available with optional tartan trim that harks back to the 1970s Esprit S1.

The 134bhp 1.6-litre and 217bhp 1.8-litre petrol engines remain unchanged.

The pricing has also been trimmed, with the Elise Sport model starting at £29,900 and the Elise Sport 220 priced at £36,500. Both cars will go on sale from December in Europe and the rest of the world from January next year.

Tester's Notes

Matt Prior



Bedfordshire police want to make money from users of the M1

Don't try to defend the indefensible. There are media training courses at publishers and other companies that'll tell you that: don't be a guest on the news, they say, and suggest that something illegal such as software piracy is fine. And definitely don't go on the telly and condone breaking the speed limit, because someone will make you look stupid.

Which brings me to the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Olly Martins, who went before the Home Affairs Select Committee last week. He said he's been thinking about switching on, permanently, the speed cameras on the M1 between junctions 10 and 13, where there's a variable speed limit and cameras that are only used when there's a lower speed limit in place. Martins has the power to have them turned on all the time, and might use it.

Which doesn't seem so bad, does it? What's there to criticise?

He's not doing it for road safety. He's desperate for the money that the fines would generate

If you don't speed, you don't get nicked, so don't come out, the sensible advice will say, and suggest it's an outrageous thing to do. After all, those cameras are there for a reason: to improve your own safety. Aren't they?

Well, motoring groups are stamping their feet about Martins' "utterly obnoxious" proposal. He's not doing it for road safety. No, he's desperate for the money that speeding fines would generate.

"Cash-strapped PCC proposes funding by speed

camera" his own office's website has announced. Martins has also floated the idea of getting his officers' uniforms and patrol cars sponsored by local firms.

Bedfordshire has far fewer police, per capita, than most areas in the UK, yet some of the highest levels of crime in the country. Martins, then, finds himself in a fix. "I am running out of levers to pull to keep Bedfordshire Police financially viable," he said. "Strict enforcement of the speed limit could raise £1m. That's better than losing 25 more officers."

It's an interesting position, but one that rather undermines the case for introducing speed cameras in the first place. A PCC will be seen to be doing well if their force reduces crime and improves public safety, but while Martins says "motorists staying within the speed limit will not be affected", he actively wants and *needs* people not to do that. He has cameras to enforce a limit, but he requires people to ignore it so his force remains viable.

Perhaps Martins thinks speeding is no big deal – that by driving at 80mph on the M1 you will be doing Bedfordshire a public service. Curious. Speed cameras were introduced to slow people down because speed kills, and it cannot be condoned or tolerated. It would be foolish to disagree – unless, apparently, you're a Police and Crime Commissioner.



The M1's cameras currently only work when a lower limit is in place

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Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA Octavia Range: Urban 33.6 (8.4) to 72.4 (3.9), Extra Urban 51.4 (5.5) to 88.3 (3.2), Combined 43.5 (6.5) to 80.7 (3.5). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA Octavia Range: 147 to 90g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Our CO₂ and consumption values are provisional and are currently under review. Revised values will be published if necessary.



A Week In Cars

Steve Cropley



French airbase is to become MSV's latest motorsport venture

MONDAY

Sorry to hear of the quiet, sad departure from Volkswagen's top echelon of 64-year-old design chief Walter de Silva, whose world has clearly fallen in following the departure of big boss Martin Winterkorn. As car-creation royalty, the pair toured the motor shows of the world, admired wherever they went. But when Big Martin had to walk the plank, things must have looked much bleaker for de Silva, especially since VW is now intent on making savings, including on concept cars.

Still, de Silva leaves a wonderful legacy. He created many fine cars with his own pen and influenced others to create more. In many convivial meetings he proved to us hacks – via skilful sketches on convenient scraps of paper – that even as a big cheese, he still drew cars with the same delight as a kid doodling on the back of an exercise book.

De Silva always said his most beautiful car was the Audi A5, but I reckon the accolade goes to the Alfa Romeo 156, a car of enduringly fine proportions whose design influences on the just-launched Giulia are perfectly obvious nearly 20 years later.

De Silva drew cars with the same delight as a kid doodling on the back of an exercise book

TUESDAY

You'd think, given the wall of verbiage we've seen and read on VW, that everything worthwhile had been said. But a note that landed today from Steve Randle, who runs a Warwick-based engineering consultancy, offers something new. It's not necessarily top

management skulduggery that's to blame, Randle suggests, but a too-rigid, results-driven culture imposed on middle-rankers. Listen to this: "Within large organisations the fear of failure, and consequent loss of livelihood, is a powerful motivator. What starts as a fudge, begun in the hope things will come good, has a nasty habit of getting out of control. The way we manage our people is even more important than the way we manage our engines." Makes plenty of sense to me.

WEDNESDAY

Amazing news! MotorSport Vision, the driving and race circuit group owned and fronted by former F1 driver Jonathan Palmer, has completed



Echoes of Walter de Silva's Alfa 156 can be seen in the new Giulia

the purchase of a 1263-acre former military airbase at Laon-Couvron in France – complete with 60 buildings. The plan is to establish a gigantic 'motorsport village' – featuring a five-mile circuit – that will emulate the success of Bedford Autodrome and attract car lovers from across Europe, particularly those from Germany, France and the UK.

The emphasis will be on driving days, but there's also a plan to stage four race weekends a year and offer supporting activities such as 4x4 driving. Palmer will cater especially for today's super-fast road cars by making the circuit very fast but very safe. Drivers will be able to sustain top speeds without the brake and tyre-killing effects of continual low-speed corners. The opening is bound to be a traffic-stopper; I can't wait.

THURSDAY

Handed back our holiday Volkswagen e-Up with regret, having come quite easily to grips with the fast charging culture of Ecotricity's motorway-based 'electric highway'. Despite this, the experience convinces me that to be taken seriously, cars like this need longer ranges. The official claim for this one is about 90 miles, but the reality is you start worrying at 60 miles, and by 80 you're really concerned if there isn't a charging point around the corner. The e-Up's makers will point out that the e-Up is a city car so journeys are shorter, but the trouble with that argument is that they've made the car so capable in every other respect (barring an occasionally curiously bouncy ride) that it feels as if you could drive the thing around the world.

And another thing...

At last, a reason to lift the Range Rover Sport's bonnet: leaves in the air intakes ahead of the screen. I once had a Lotus Excel that hoovered up leaves. It's weird to own a car more susceptible to boiling in winter than summer...



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FIRST DRIVES

This week's new cars

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13.11.15, Spain Bentley's first SUV aims to mix 4x4 capability with the highest levels of luxury and 187mph performance





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CITROËN GRAND C4 PICASSO

The Citroën Grand C4 Picasso is the first MPV in its segment to break the 110g CO₂/km barrier with the BlueHDi 150* delivering up to 72.4 MPG.² With its ultra-flexible 7-seat interior, 360° Vision Parking,³ Keyless Entry and Start,⁴ and Panoramic Windscreen, it's no wonder it's been voted 'Best MPV' by both What Car? and Auto Express for two years running.



CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE

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CITROËN prefers TOTAL Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures (litres per 100km/MPG) and CO₂ Emissions (g/km). Highest: Grand C4 Picasso THP 165 S&S EAT6 Auto with 18" wheels: Urban 7.5/37.7, Extra Urban 4.9/57.6, Combined 5.8/48.7, 134 CO₂. Lowest: Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 100 S&S manual: Urban 4.5/62.8, Extra Urban 3.5/80.7, Combined 3.8/74.3, 99 CO₂. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.

Model shown: Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 120 S&S 6 speed manual Exclusive+. OTR price £26,665 (incl. Teles Blue metallic paint at extra cost of £520). *Available on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive and above. ²Combined Cycle on Grand C4 Picasso BlueHDi 150 S&S 6 speed manual Exclusive with 17" wheels. ³Optional at extra cost on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+. ⁴Optional at extra cost on Grand C4 Picasso VTR+ and Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive, available as standard on Grand C4 Picasso Exclusive+.



Well, there's no denying it looks like a Bentley. Whether it feels like one or not we'll come to in a moment, but for now, no question, aesthetically it has the cues. The strong rear haunches, the diamond grilling on the front. I am no arbiter of a car's appearance (for which Bentley should probably be grateful), but if the task was to make it look instantly recognisable, the first job is done.

This is the new Bentayga, and as an example of how gracefully Bentley's model line-up has evolved since Volkswagen took ownership of the company in 1998, you can think of it as only the third 'new' model to have since arrived – if, like I do, you count the Mulsanne as a replacement for the Arnage, and thus the Flying Spur saloon and Continental

coupé/convertible as the other two 'new' cars.

This is at least as significant as those two: the wider motor industry's overdue recognition that people who have an awful lot of money do not necessarily want to be continually photographed driving a supercar or mistaken for an airport limousine driver. So they buy Range Rovers specified to the heavens – a fact that Land Rover recently seems to have appreciated, too.

I've often wondered how far up the food chain the limits on SUVs run and have suspected it's quite a lot further even than this £160,200 Bentayga. I suppose Rolls-Royce will find out soon enough.

Meantime, though, the Bentley. Like the Flying Spur and Continental before it, it takes full advantage of

the Volkswagen Group's ownership of the British firm. Beneath it is, ostensibly, the new MLB-Evo architecture that also sits beneath Audi's flagship SUV, the Q7 – a car whose price has also topped £100k during its time, if you remember. And it's a car that is already pretty vast, so at 5.14 metres long, the Bentayga isn't that much bigger again. At nearly three metres, the wheelbase is within 2mm of the Q7's and the Bentley will later offer seven seats, too – although there are no more than five for now.

Coming later, too, will be hybrid and diesel powerplants but, sensibly enough, from the start Bentley is only offering what'll be the top-spec motor (until a Speed edition arrives): a new variant of the 6.0-litre W12 engine. Because, let's face it, if you've got a car with a 2420kg kerb weight

and yet, because you're Bentley, you want it to reach 60mph in 4.0sec and a top speed of 187mph, you're going to need 12 cylinders and two turbochargers.

If that sounds thirsty, it is. There's cylinder shutdown and this new engine is 30kg lighter than its predecessor, but still it returns only 21.6mpg on the combined cycle and emits 297g/km of CO₂. During its day with us, although I'll concede that we drove it pretty hard, it returned little more than half of that.

Those aren't the kinds of numbers that Bentley would rather you focused on. Instead, try some of these: there are 17 standard and 90 extended paint colours (and any other on request); there are 15 standard leather hide colours to choose from and seven different →



New version of the twin-turbo 6.0-litre W12 petrol engine puts out 664lb ft at 1350-4500rpm and 600bhp at 5000-6000rpm; rear cabin feels luxurious and is roomy enough



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◀ species of veneer. Again, if you want more, just ask. Our test car rolled up with £48,000 worth of options, which would by no means be an unusual order.

So far, so Bentley, then, and the same is true of the interior. There are a few cues that this is a VW Group model, but no more than you'll find in a Continental – and the Bentayga benefits here from being based on the latest VW architecture. Instead of the chunky old gear selector that occupies about a third of the transmission tunnel, the new electronic controller for the eight-speed transmission leaves more room around it for additional switches and convenience features. Likewise, the steering wheel still gets gearbox override paddles but, as in a VW or Audi, they're small and rotate with

the wheel, rather than being the fixed, railway-signal-box-spec levers of the Continental. There's a digital display between the two analogue dials and the part-touchscreen, partial-controlled entertainment system – while still not our first-choice system in the whole of motordom – has a level of ease and functionality like no Bentley before it.

If you're accustomed to the Mercedes-Benz/Audi rotary dial on the transmission tunnel for this, though, you'll instead reach accidentally for what turns out to be the drive controller. The Bentayga gets four on-road drive modes and four off-road ones for the air suspension and four-wheel-drive transmission with Torsen centre diff. We started out with good intentions to try both, but in the end we only

managed the on-road stuff – probably a not unfamiliar tale for Bentaygas in the years to come.

The suspension is by air as standard, and that provides the kind of isolation we've come to expect, with the very occasional echoey 'bong' over sharp surface ripples but an otherwise composed and particularly serene waft. It doesn't matter that much whether you're in Comfort or Sport (or the default, 'Bentley') on the dial, because it's never overly firm, thanks to a new system of which Bentley is rightly pretty proud.

The electrics are by a 48V system, because the Bentayga gets active anti-roll bars and the extra juice is needed to make them respond with suitable vigour and speed. There are electric actuators that act to

stiffen or loosen the anti-roll bars depending on what you're doing – so they're slack and loose on a straight and allow lots of wheel deflection, whereas in a corner they quickly stiffen to reduce body roll and keep the movements of what is, let's face it, quite a big body in check. It works with remarkable effect, feeling better to me than adaptive damping, which stiffens dampers come the corners but unsettles the ride more in the process.

The Bentley, then, feels pretty natural, retaining its comfort while simply adding additional control when it needs it. There's remarkably little roll and when, if pushed, it eases into relatively early understeer, you look at the leather and veneer, the turned aluminium air vents and their organ stop adjusters and just →



Bentayga has four selectable drive modes for on-road use and four more for off-roading; 'event' seat in the boot slides and folds and, of course, has diamond-quilted leather



← remind yourself that you're in a Bentley, not a Porsche Cayenne.

Having a W12 engine – no matter how compact in theory it is – in the nose presumably does little for the agility, but it does lots for the performance. The torque curve peaks at 664lb ft at 1350rpm and stays there until 4000rpm. Peak power, 600bhp, is through 5000rpm to 6000rpm, although there's relatively little point in taking the engine all the way there. It's smooth enough at lower throttle inputs and revs, but it fails to sound particularly special or expensive when revved harder. Bentley hasn't said whether the V8, so good in the Continental, will find a home here too (because it's quite busy selling the first couple of years' worth of W12 production, so why would it?), but the Bentayga wouldn't hurt for a bit more woofle.

There is also – and I'm being

picky here, but this is a £160,000 car, so we can afford to be – the occasional snatch in the drivetrain. Perhaps it's the gearbox's 'coasting' modes, which disconnect the engine from the transmission when under no load to improve economy. But when it takes it up again, it's not always seamless.

However, by and large this is an exceptionally comfortable and always impeccably quiet big SUV. Drive it smoothly and it'll reward you with its oily smooth electric steering (a good speed and Servotronic, so it quickens towards the limits of its lock), its calm ride and a really impressive sense of cabin isolation.

And all this from, let's be honest, one of the widest remits a manufacturer has ever set itself. Bentley has established a reputation as a maker of sporting cars that must also be luxurious. It's hard enough

to make a luxury saloon that can do the thick end of 200mph in safety and security, while retaining the 'luxury' part of the tag. Now throw on top of those demands the additional need for this vehicle to travel, as it will be asked to, into sand dunes and across frozen steppe, or to tow several tonnes of horse and trailer, and you start to appreciate the task Bentley has set itself.

It would, presumably, have been rather easier if it didn't have to worry about the whole 187mph thing as well, but it's to Bentley's great credit that it has. I'd think that, in all of motoring, only the Porsche Cayenne and some variants of the Range Rover Sport get set a remit you'd consider as broad as the Bentayga's – and the Bentley has to do it with the trappings of all that wood, aluminium and leather aboard, too. No wonder it took them a while to get

around to it. In the end, though, it was well worth the wait.

MATT PRIOR

BENTLEY BENTAYGA

Fulfils one of the widest remits ever given to a car with ease. Terrific performance and refinement



Price	£160,200
Engine	W12, 5950cc, twin-turbo, petrol
Power	600bhp at 5000-6000rpm
Torque	664lb ft at 1350-4500rpm
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
Kerb weight	2440kg
Top speed	187mph
0-60mph	4.0sec
Economy	21.6mpg (combined)
CO₂/tax band	296g/km, 37%



In its detailing and more prominent styling features, this looks unmistakably like a Bentley



Smooth steering, a well-judged ride and fine cabin isolation make driving it a relaxed affair



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Ferrari F12tdf

9.11.15, Italy Harder-hitting, lighter and more agile F12 is a challenging limited-run special

Have they made *un mostro*? Ferrari's F12 has never wanted for more power, but here we are: the F12tdf, a limited-run, special version of the F12 with a name that references the old Tour de France road race, at which Ferrari did rather well. The F12tdf has lots more power than the F12 and, thankfully, plenty of modifications alongside it.

Ferrari's special 12-cylinder car programme has previously given us the raw 599 GTO. Ferrari says the F12tdf is just as extreme and that it's more agile than any previous front-engined V12.

There are several ways to make a car more agile, and Ferrari has tried them all here. One is adding poke; the F12tdf has 770bhp instead of 730bhp, thanks mostly to easier breathing and race-derived mechanical tappets, letting the 6.3-litre V12 engine rev to 8900rpm.

Method two is weight reduction, so the F12tdf is 110kg lighter than the F12. Leather is replaced by Alcantara and plenty of aluminium by carbonfibre.

But the easiest way is simply to fit huge front tyres. At the start of the F12tdf development process, Ferrari did just that – first fitting 315-section F12 rears to the front, and then even slicks, to see what it was like.

Hilarious but perilously unstable, in short. Here, Ferrari's marketing people like an aerospace analogy: a modern fighter jet is inherently unstable, but electronic control systems make it flyable. Similarly, Ferrari uses active rear steering to make the unstable F12tdf driveable.

It calls the system a 'virtual short wheelbase', although that's not strictly accurate. The 285 rather than 255 front tyres increase front grip and make the wheelbase feel shorter. A ZF rear steer system, as used on some Porsche 911s, adjusts the rear toe angle by up to a degree, almost always in the same direction as the fronts, to put stability back in. That virtually lengthens rather than shortens the wheelbase, but otherwise the analogy isn't unfounded. Ferrari likes the system so much that it'll use it again.

Other changes are mere details. The aerodynamics are improved, gear ratios are 5-6% shorter and spring rates are 20% stiffer, a difference "you'll feel within a metre". If you've been invited to buy one of 799 F12tdfs, it'll cost you £339,000, you'll own at least five other Ferraris and "we know you very well".

Ferrari admits that its special

Untroubled by turbos, engine response is electric and it makes a glorious, old-school Formula 1 noise



Wider front tyres and rear steer aid agility and stability; back tyres are easy to light up



Cabin swaps the original car's leather for Alcantara and carbonfibre replaces much of the aluminium; in all, the F12tdf is 110kg lighter than an F12



Function and purpose are evident everywhere, but nowhere more so than in the reworked 6.3-litre V12, which now possesses a 770bhp punch

V12s aren't simple to drive quickly – unlike the standard mid-engined V8s – and the F12tdf takes some learning before you feel completely comfortable with it on a circuit.

On the road, there's no such bother. The F12tdf is always firm. It's not crashy, but you know what's beneath you. It retains the F12's two-turn steering, but because of the stiffness and wider tyres, it feels connected and responsive and, in many ways, easier to drive. In the hills around Maranello, the F12tdf steers with ease and precision; it's a big car but easy to place.

And it has an utterly magnificent powertrain. Untroubled by turbos, its response is electric, it makes a glorious, old-school Formula 1 noise and the already superb dual-clutch automatic gearbox receives a few tweaks to further sharpen the shifts.

At high revs, the F12tdf's throttle response can sometimes be too sharp – even Ferrari's test drivers think so – but the nature of the programme is to bring some racing car feel to these special V12s. Plenty

of race drivers would love an engine this phenomenal.

On a circuit, though, the F12tdf is not straightforward like most front-engined, rear-driven cars. An Aston Martin V12 Vantage, for example, is as simple as they come: settle the nose as you turn, get back on the power, enjoy the balance.

The F12tdf isn't like that, partly because there isn't really any understeer in the first place. The additional tyre width makes the front hyper-agile, so in faster corners it darts towards an apex, and when you expect the rear to unsettle as a result, rear steer intervenes to keep it stable, trimming the back to the same apex as the front at a speed unobtainable without the system.

Apply significant throttle now, though – and more or less any right foot movement is significant in this car – and the rears still light up. At which point the speed at which you're travelling, the engine sharpness, the steering's quickness and the angle of the rear wheels can conspire to make it feel slightly unnatural.

With familiarity, you learn to anticipate the F12tdf's characteristics and drive with lighter, more fingertippy touches and smaller inputs, and then it becomes a deeply rewarding thing. But it's not a car – like the docile Ferrari 488 GTB – that's easily grasped. I'd want more than the few laps of this test drive to decide if it's more rewarding than a conventional set-up, but no question it's impressive – and not just as a technology showcase.

That isn't meant to sound down on the F12tdf; there's oodles to love. The cabin, the noise, performance and responses are all exceptional. It's just unusual sometimes, but given that it's meant to be challenging, it can easily afford some depth of character.

Besides, I wonder: would I choose an F12tdf over a Lamborghini Aventador SV? Undoubtedly. Over a McLaren 675LT, a five-star car? Quite possibly. Certainly, I'd want many, many more goes before saying for sure – an addictiveness that is, ultimately, the whole point.

MATT PRIOR



FERRARI F12TDF

A hugely rewarding driver's car, albeit a demanding one. Well worth the effort



Price	£339,000
Engine	V12, 6262cc, petrol
Power	770bhp at 8500rpm
Torque	520lb ft at 6250rpm
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch automatic
Kerb weight	1520kg
Top speed	211mph
0-62mph	2.9sec
Economy	18.3mpg (combined)
CO₂/tax band	360g/km, 37%

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Audi Q7 e-tron quattro

10.11.15, Spain Large SUV pumps up the tech quotient with a clever plug-in hybrid powertrain

This plug-in hybrid version of Audi's Q7 is based on the 3.0 TDI quattro model, which uses a V6 diesel engine to drive all four wheels. The hybrid conversion includes a new version of Audi's eight-speed automatic transmission, into which is sandwiched a fairly punchy 258lb ft electric motor, whose battery pack is mounted above the independent rear suspension.

The Q7 e-tron also gets a clever heat pump system that helps to warm the interior using waste heat from the electronics. This significantly reduces the drain on the battery pack and extends the car's electric range, which is claimed to be 34 miles. This car also gets Audi's Virtual Cockpit, a digital instrument cluster that is configurable to show different screens and graphic displays.

The big advance on this car is a so-called 'predictive efficiency assistant', which uses data from Audi's Navigation Plus system, with support from the active cruise control, to pre-empt the driving conditions ahead and switch the

powertrain automatically between diesel, hybrid and pure EV modes to maximise efficiency.

The two areas where the Q7 e-tron really stands out are its engine and its cabin refinement. Even under full-bore acceleration, the V6 diesel never raises its voice above a distant, cultured hum. Audi is claiming another world first here. The engine sits on new mounts equipped with 'electro-magnetic oscillation coil actuators', which counter the engine vibrations that would otherwise be fed into the car's structure.

Cabin refinement is first rate, especially in terms of quelling wind noise. Voices from the rear seats also come across to the front-seat occupants completely clearly, which is rare. Full-bore performance can be briskly satisfying, which is unsurprising when there's a 516lb ft peak with both engines engaged.

However, the Q7 e-tron has an all-wheel drive system and a biggish battery pack, hence the 2445kg weight. As our test drive showed, having three substantial adults in the

cabin means the e-tron isn't always as roaringly rapid as its raw figures might suggest.

Some aspects of the handling are less than satisfactory, too. The e-tron runs straight and fast on motorways and picks its way through narrow village streets with great ease. But it is less happy on fast, sweeping corners. Set the car up for a long corner and the Q7 allows noticeable body roll to build up. But once the driver unwinds the lock as the car exits the corner, the e-tron struggles to settle itself onto the new trajectory.

As you'd expect, the Q7's interior is a masterclass in fit, finish and premium design, although the front of the cabin is snug rather than generously spacious. And although the boot is claimed to offer a 650-litre volume, it is quite shallow once the luggage cover is deployed.

The switch between braking gently using the electric motor in the transmission and full-on stopping power via the hydraulic system is hard to gauge, too.

Our test route covered 60 miles,

with a mix of motorway, fast A-roads, a winding hill route and small villages. With a fully charged battery and the predictive efficiency assistant in charge, we covered 21 miles of it using the diesel engine at 51mpg and 39 miles on the battery, using 12.2kWh of battery energy. What seems to be a real-world 34 miles of EV range would allow many people's day-to-day driving to be completed on the battery alone.

This is not a car for driving enthusiasts, but in the wake of the diesel emissions scandal, the Q7 e-tron looks like it might be the upmarket family car of the future. Its hefty price may well be a significant drag on sales, but predictive efficiency assistance could be the future of day-to-day driving.

HILTON HOLLOWAY

AUDI Q7 E-TRON QUATTRO

Refined, spacious and frugal, with very clever tech, but hampered by its own mass and a hefty price



Price	£65,000 (est)
Engine	V6, 2967cc, diesel, plus electric motor
Power	369bhp (total)
Torque	516lb ft (total)
Kerb weight	2445kg
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
0-62mph	6.0sec
Top speed	135mph
Economy	166.2mpg (combined)
CO ₂ /tax band	50g/km, 8%



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PEUGEOT

0-120-



0

No fight is straighter than this, in two senses: standstill to 120mph and back to a standstill as fast as possible. Supercars, lightweights, coupés and even a hot hatch battle to be quickest. **Matt Prior** reports

PHOTOGRAPHY LUC LACEY



The Ariel Atom is to blame. For years we ran a competition called 0-100-0, an acceleration and braking test for cars that was, as the name suggested, a sprint from rest to 100mph and back to rest again.

In the earlier years, there was an unpredictability to the results. Lightweights and supercars vied for supremacy, while race and rally cars set non-production records.

And then came the Ariel Atom

with a supercharger strapped to its engine, and with it the unpredictability ended. What'll be quickest? It'll be the Atom 300. Again. So we canned it.

But, as you may have heard, Autocar turned 120 years old this month, which gave us an idea: reprise 0-100-0 but, to even things up, increase the target speed to a poignant 120mph, thus giving significance to the anniversary and allowing a broader range of cars –

those weighing more than half a tonne – a greater chance of competing.

Step forward, then, the running order. Ariel's Atom 3.5R is here, of course, but it's joined in the lightweight corner by the Caterham Seven 620R and a sort of lightweight, the Radical RXC500. To line up against those, we have what could well be the fastest current supercar, because it has 641bhp and a set of astonishing stoppers, in the shape of McLaren's 650S. Porsche's

911 Turbo is probably the only thing that'd run it close, so that's here, too, as is Nissan's GT-R and the now four-wheel-drive Jaguar F-Type R.

Then there are a couple of wildcards. Ford's Mustang GT is here because it's interesting to see what a big coupé can do, and Mercedes' facelifted A45 AMG represents the apogee of the current hot hatchback.

Nine contenders, then, and Blyton Park Driving Centre is our host. →

As you might expect from Lincolnshire in early November, Blyton Park is cold when we arrive. But the track is dry and the surface much better than some of the airfields we often use for features. Conditions are good enough, in other words, but will play a little into the hands of things with better traction. Shall we crack on in ascending order? Let's.

First, (or rather last in this company) then, is Ford's Mustang. This is not a complete surprise, especially given that traction is at a slight premium, but it's a newsworthy car and I'm interested to see how it goes. It's also highly unusual in this company in that it comes with a normal H-pattern gearstick and three pedals. Old school. Tellingly, nothing else here does.

It's not the easiest thing, in other words, to get off the line, but once you get the rears hooked up after a gentle getaway, the 5.0-litre Mustang takes

full throttle in first gear, although its 0-30mph time, the slowest of the day at 2.35sec, sets a theme to come. It is the slowest through 60mph and 100mph and to 120mph – especially because it needs an upshift to fifth gear at 118mph – and, by a whisker, is the slowest to stop from 120mph.

We're using Blyton's back straight for this, straight-lining a chicane (obvs) that's usually in place halfway along. It's plenty wide enough for one car at a time, as flat as anywhere else we've used for 0-100-0 and smooth in the braking zone. But is it long enough?



Our nine contenders offer real variety

In the Mustang, not quite. The run time you see is a patch of two runs – one from rest to 100mph, the other 100-120-0 after a rolling start onto the back straight. Its 21.66sec run would be flattering in much company, but not this.

Next comes the A45 AMG, which again I aim at the horizon from the earliest straight start point I can line up on, and engage its launch control.

In the Mercedes, there's a tiny amount of slip as power is diverted to the rear, but the A45 is only seven-hundredths of a second off the fastest time to 30mph that we record all day. Pulling 60mph in 4.13sec is also very respectable – although it's a number that would have needed to start with a three to be at the sharper end of things here.

Aerodynamics overwhelm the A45's modest power output above 100mph and it wants the second longest time to reach 120mph, by which time quite a lot of the →

Mustang struggles a little for traction and stops slowest



FORD MUSTANG V8 GT

Price	£33,995
Engine	V8, 4951cc, petrol
Power	415bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	391lb ft at 4250rpm
Kerb weight	1720kg
Gearbox	6-spd manual
0-60mph	5.02sec
Top speed	155mph (limited)

MERCEDES-BENZ A45 AMG

Price	£39,995
Engine	4 cyls, 1991cc, turbo, petrol
Power	376bhp at 6000rpm
Torque	350lb ft at 2250rpm
Kerb weight	1555kg
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch auto
0-60mph	4.13sec
Top speed	155mph (limited)

JAGUAR F-TYPE R AWD

Price	£91,650
Engine	V8, 5000cc, supercharged, petrol
Power	542bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	502lb ft at 3500rpm
Kerb weight	1730kg
Gearbox	8-spd automatic
0-60mph	3.72sec
Top speed	186mph



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← straight has passed and the end is looming rather quickly.

Our VBox GPS data logging gear shows the car's current speed extremely accurately with barely a delay – much more quickly than our equipment used to – but still, as 120mph approaches, you have to anticipate the arrival of your terminal velocity and decide to start braking before 120mph registers on the monitor (which, in this case, is my phone suckered to the windscreen).

There's always a 'reaction time', then, and you'll do well if you keep the speedo below 121mph. (In no case does the time affect the final results, but we've left them in.)

The A45 AMG stops with about 30 metres of the straight to spare, thus avoiding the nearby field and



I know the A45 AMG won't trouble the top order. But few other hatches would get close to it

giving an overall time of 20.5sec for the 0-120-0 run. I know it won't trouble the top order. But few other hatchbacks would get close to it.

Jaguar's F-Type RAWD is next. The F-Type has plenty of traction but no launch control. However, if you wind a little tension into the drivetrain, it gets away very well – covering 0-30mph in 1.62sec, just two-hundredths of a second slower than the fastest car of the day. It's under braking that the Jaguar loses out. Its nose pitches forward, and although it'd never trouble you on the road or a track day, it has a few tugs at the wheel as it pulls to a halt in 5.22sec. That's still good and takes it almost three seconds clear of the A45 AMG overall, but next up the road is more than a second quicker than it.

That turns out to be the GT-R in Track Package specification, which brings tyres that appreciate being warmed through and some Nismo aerodynamics but no increase in the standard 542bhp. So although it has launch control, the Nissan is no faster than the Jaguar from standstill, and there's a shimmy from the rears, as they struggle to hook up after launch engages power, which isn't evident in the Jaguar.

But by 60mph it has redressed the balance and overcome the Jaguar – 3.46sec is quick in any company, except among this lot – as would be 0-120mph in 10.94sec. The GT-R takes some slowing, mind, because it

weighs 1740kg, and asks five seconds precisely to come to a halt.

Then comes the first of what we think of as the lightweights – although the 1120kg Radical RXC500 isn't strictly a lightweight like the Caterham or Ariel, but you take the point.

What it shares with those is a transmission that features three pedals and whose clutch can be forgotten about as soon as you're rolling. The RXC feels like a genuine racing car from the moment you slip inside it, and beavering around to warm the rear tyres is one of the most evocative moments of the day.

There's no launch control per se, but if you flatten the throttle, the turbocharged V6 will hold a few thousand revs, which are unleashed as soon as you drop the clutch. It's relatively easy to hook it up, then, but it pays to short-shift to second as the turbocharged power overwhelms the rears in first gear. This shuffling means the leggy Radical is the second slowest to 30mph, a situation it has improved considerably by the time it reaches 120mph, to which it is fifth quickest. This is the lowest-placed car without ABS, but pedal feel is excellent and retardation strong.

Launching a Porsche 911 Turbo S, meanwhile, could scarcely be simpler. You stand on the brake pedal and then rapidly apply some throttle. The clutch of the PDK 'box stays disengaged and the revs will sit at →

Prior and Saunders crunch the numbers back in the warmth





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AUDI 3.0TDi (ALL MODELS) » 315+ BHP
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BMW

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M135i/ M235i » 402 BHP
M4/M3 3.0T » 520+ BHP
M5 F10/M6 (STAGE 1) » 680 BHP
M5 F10/M6 (STAGE 2) » 730 BHP
F10 520D » 240 BHP
F10 530D » 305 BHP
335i/135i/X6 » 370+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
123D » 252 BHP

316D/216D/116D » 160 BHP
318D/218D/118D » 225 BHP
330D E90 » 296+ BHP
320D E90 » 215 BHP
420i/320i/220i/120i » 275+ BHP
435i/ F30 335i » 390 BHP
428i/328i » 295 BHP
535D / 335D / X5 SD » 355+ BHP
640D/335D/535D/435D » 390 BHP
730D » 305+ BHP
X5 4.0D / 740D » 370 BHP
X5 3.0D » 305 BHP
X6 X5.0i 4.4 » 500+ BHP
X6 M50D/X5M50D/550D » 450 BHP

MERCEDES-BENZ

A200CDi/C200CDi/E200CDi » 175 BHP
A250/C250 » 260 BHP
A45/CLA45 » 420 BHP
C300 HYBRID » 285 BHP
A220CDi/C220CDi/E220CDi » 215 BHP
C350/CLS350/E350/S350 » 315 BHP
E400 /C450 » 420+ BHP
C400 » 400 BHP
'63' 5.5 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 690+ BHP
'500' 4.7 Bi-TURBO ALL MODELS » 498+ BHP
'S65 (W222) » 780 BHP
SL65 BLACK » 720+ BHP (+DELIMIT)
SL65 AMG » 690 BHP (+DE-LIMIT)
'55' AMG COMPRESSOR » 580+ BHP
C63 AMG 6.3 » 530+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT)

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SL63 AMG 6.3 » 560+ BHP (+DE-LIMIT,
RE-MAP & LOWER ABC SUSPENSION)
CL600 Bi-TURBO » 580+ BHP
SLK55 AMG » 420+ BHP (+DELIMIT)
320 CDi V6 » 274 BHP
350 CDi V6 » 312 BHP
420 /450 CDi V8 » 358 BHP

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» 240+ BHP

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997 TURBO 3.6 » 625+ BHP
997 GT2 RS » 670+ BHP
996 TURBO/GT2 » 600+ BHP
997 CARRERA S PDK » 400+ BHP
997 CARRERA S » 376+ BHP
997 CARRERA PDK » 368 BHP
997 CARRERA GTS » 435 BHP
997 GT3 UP » 436 BHP
BOXSTER 3.4S » 336+ BHP
CAYMAN S » 342 BHP
MACAN 3.0D » 315 BHP
CAYENNE GTS » 440 BHP

CAYENNE TURBO 4.8 » 578+ BHP
CAYENNE TURBO S 4.8 » 600+ BHP
CAYENNE 4.2 DIESEL » 450+ BHP
CAYENNE DIESEL » 315+ BHP
PANAMERA TURBO » 600+ BHP
PANAMERA DIESEL » 315+ BHP

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MASERATI GHIBLI 3.0 DIESEL » 312 BHP
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← 4000rpm. Release the brake and it fairly lets go. Because it's cold, there's a touch of slip, but with a 3.8-litre engine sitting over the back wheels, traction is the least of its issues. A 1.41sec 0-30mph time is faster than anything else by two-tenths.

Left in drive, it'll upshift itself rapidly, past 60mph in 3.01sec, the fastest of the day, although that's not an advantage it retains by the time it passes 100mph, at 6.67sec.

But it's under braking where the Porsche loses out. Not that it's a big criticism; only three cars here wanted less than five seconds to stop from 120mph and the 911 modestly asked for 5.08sec. It's good enough to put the Porsche fourth.

Those sub-5.0sec-stopping cars were all in the top three, and two of them weighed precious little. Third overall, then, is Caterham's 620R, fitted with a sequential gearbox that, like the Radical, needs clutch off the line but not afterwards.

The trouble with a 310bhp Caterham, though, is that, even after a couple of tyre-warming laps, traction is not a strong point. You ask for a few thousand revs, slip the clutch slightly to get away and there are two main probabilities: the rears light up, or the engine bogs down.

In between those two, you can get it about right, though, and the Seven will reach 30mph in a respectable 1.74sec and 60mph in an impressive



Three of a kind: Seven and Atom are lightweights, as is the RXC500 in spirit if not mass



F-Type has no launch control, but all-wheel drive aids traction for a rapid getaway

(given the conditions) 3.5sec. The manual sequential gearbox's lever – there are no paddles – wants a firm pull to engage the next gear, but the shifts are extremely fast if they're shoved through firmly.

Better, though, is the way it stops. Brake pedal feel is exceptional and all four wheels approach a locking point at the same time – so at 4.72sec, it's the second-fastest stopper here, a hundredth quicker than the Ariel.

The Atom, though, holds the advantage – and second place overall – because of the way it gets off the line. Thus is the way with Ariels.

There's no launch control on the supercharged Atom 3.5R, but it doesn't need it, such is the traction. On manual supercharged Atoms, the fastest way is a full-bore start in second gear, but such is the quickness of the gearshifts on the sequential manual 'box, with a pneumatic actuator for the diddy paddles, that it's no longer necessary. Only the 911 Turbo S (1.41sec) gets to 30mph quicker than the Atom (1.6sec), and by 60mph the Ariel has clawed back all but two-hundredths of that time, at 3.03sec.

Once, lightweight cars with small-capacity engines and poor aerodynamics would have run out of puff by 120mph, but the Ariel does it in 9.2sec, still three-tenths quicker than the 911. The brake bias needs winding a long way forward →

ARIEL ATOM 3.5R

Price	£64,800
Engine	4 cyls, 1998cc, supercharged, petrol
Power	350bhp at 8400rpm
Torque	243lb ft at 6100rpm
Kerb weight	550kg
Gearbox	6-spd sequential manual
0-60mph	3.03sec
Top speed	155mph

CATERHAM SEVEN 620R

Price	£49,995
Engine	4 cyls, 1999cc, supercharged, petrol
Power	310bhp at 7700rpm
Torque	219lb ft at 7350rpm
Kerb weight	545kg
Gearbox	6-spd sequential manual
0-60mph	3.53sec
Top speed	155mph





RADICAL RXC500

Price	£143,500
Engine	V6, 3496cc, twin-turbo, petrol
Power	530bhp at 6100rpm
Torque	481lb ft at 5000rpm
Kerb weight	1120kg
Gearbox	7-spd sequential manual
0-60mph	3.74sec
Top speed	185mph



PORSCHE 911 TURBO S

Price	£142,120
Engine	6 cyls, 3800cc, twin-turbo, petrol
Power	552bhp at 6500rpm
Torque	516lb ft at 2100rpm
Kerb weight	1605kg
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch auto
0-60mph	3.01sec
Top speed	198mph



Air brake helps the McLaren stop with such force that you have to feel it to believe it

Just 4.39sec after applying the McLaren's pedal, you have stopped from 120mph – a decelerative phenomenon



Prior's phone acts as a monitor for the timing gear; Porsche's brakes haul in 1605kg



← to prevent the rear wheels from locking up, but once done, it stops well and the Ariel's overall time of 13.93sec is a full half a second quicker than the Seven 620R.

Even so, it's more than a second behind the quickest car here. Perhaps 0-100-0 would have been fairer on the Ariel after all, because it just can't live with McLaren's 650S.

That the McLaren is only rear-wheel drive means its launch control is fighting a battle from the off, but once it has passed 60mph in 3.26sec, it is uncatchable; 100mph goes in 6.19sec – equal first with the Atom – and 120mph in 8.34sec, far quicker than anything.

But it's the way the McLaren stops that marks it out as exceptional. Hit the left pedal and the air brake pops up, the 650S dives and thuds echo through its carbonfibre chassis as the brakes sweep off speed at an incredible rate. Just 4.39sec after applying the pedal, you have stopped from 120mph – a decelerative phenomenon that has to be felt to be believed. And one that contributes to the 650S's inaugural 0-120-0 title-winning time of 12.73sec.

Maybe 0-121-0 next year, then? Sure, why not?

Only – I confess – I got to about 122.5mph in the McLaren before it started slowing down. So it has a bit to spare. **A**

**NISSAN GT-R TRACK ATTACK**

Price	£88,560
Engine	V6, 3799cc, twin-turbo, petrol
Power	542bhp at 6400rpm
Torque	466lb ft at 3200-5800rpm
Kerb weight	1740kg
Gearbox	6-spd dual-clutch auto
0-60mph	3.46sec
Top speed	196mph

McLAREN 650S SPIDER

Price	£215,250
Engine	V8, 3799cc, twin-turbo, petrol
Power	641bhp at 7250rpm
Torque	500lb ft at 6000rpm
Kerb weight	1486kg
Gearbox	7-spd dual-clutch auto
0-60mph	3.26sec
Top speed	204mph

THE TIME SHEET

CAR	0-30	0-60	0-100	0-120	REACTION	120-70	70-0	120-0	OVERALL	RANK	WITHOUT REACTION
McLaren 650S Spider	1.62	3.26	6.19	8.34	0.62	2.01	2.38	4.39	13.35	1	12.73
Ariel Atom 3.5R	1.6	3.03	6.19	9.2	0.21	1.87	2.86	4.73	14.14	2	13.93
Caterham Seven 620R	1.74	3.53	6.84	9.83	0.54	1.85	2.87	4.72	15.09	3	14.55
Porsche 911 Turbo S	1.41	3.01	6.67	9.56	0.66	2.14	2.94	5.08	15.3	4	14.64
Radical RXC500	2.01	3.74	7.28	9.91	0.27	1.96	3.19	5.15	15.33	5	15.06
Nissan GT-R Track Attack	1.63	3.46	7.65	10.94	0.16	1.99	3.01	5.0	16.1	6	15.94
Jaguar F-Type R AWD	1.62	3.72	8.58	12.14	0.13	2.13	3.09	5.22	17.49	7	17.36
Mercedes A45 AMG	1.67	4.13	9.92	14.92	0.29	2.17	3.12	5.29	20.5	8	20.21
Ford Mustang V8 GT	2.35	5.02	11.49	16.31	0.52	2.3	3.05	5.35	22.18	9	21.66

MARANELLO AGAIN, OLD FRIEND

In 1988, this very Ferrari Testarossa starred in an Autocar comparison and just happened to be owned by the father of **Andrew Frankel**, who takes it for a blast after tracking it down 27 years later

PHOTOGRAPHY LUC LACEY

Back in 1988, testing a Ferrari in Britain was up there with cracking time travel, proving Fermat's last theorem and anyone other than McLaren winning a grand prix: theoretically feasible but almost impossible aims. Back then, Ferraris were imported by Inchcape, whose PR agency took pride in ensuring what it regarded as the grubbier elements of the fourth estate – the motoring press, mainly – were kept as far as possible from its products.

Take its flagship, the Testarossa. It had come out in 1984, but four years later we'd had not one whiff of its 5.0-litre flat 12 motor. Its reputation said it was a bit of a duffer: quicker but uglier and less involving than the Boxer it replaced. But we didn't actually know.

Now you must forgive a small, self-indulgent digression, because it is central to this story. I joined Autocar in June 1988 and by July the editor had already realised his mistake. You won't find my name in any magazine published at the time because, as said editor was kind enough to point out, "I'd only have to take it out again". I was sinking fast and needed a lifeline, something to make me indispensable to Autocar, for long enough for me to figure out where I was going wrong. And this car, this actual car, was that lifeline. In short, my dad had a Testarossa.

He let us borrow it because he recognised I was already in the Last Chance saloon and about to fall off my bar stool. I'd like to say the resulting story about an Exmoor encounter with a Lancia Delta



In 1988, this Testarossa battled a Lancia Delta Integrale

Integrale did the trick, but I didn't even write it. But I did drive both cars, crashed neither, showed I was at least not incompetent behind the wheel of a genuinely quick car and therefore provided some grounds for keeping me. So this car saved me.

It was another former Autocar employee, Ben Oliver, who 27 years later alerted me to its reappearance. He spotted an ad on the Graypaul Classic Cars website, name-checking my father and asking £185,000 for the car – a lot even these days. So I rang Graypaul's Robin Simpson, who said that after my father had sold it to Graypaul, having done a few thousand miles in it, they'd sold it to a man who kept it as an ornament for a quarter of a century. In its 28 years, the car has done just over 8000 miles, most of them with various Frankel backsides behind the wheel. Apart →



MANY THANKS TO ROBIN SIMPSON
OF GRAYPAUL CLASSIC CARS
(GRAYPAULCLASSICCARS.COM)



What it was like to own a Testarossa

TO HIM, it was the trip of a lifetime. My father bought the Testarossa as a semi-retirement present to himself. In place of the daily grind, he bought a share in a small business in the north of England and the grand plan was to use the Ferrari to travel maybe once a month between there and where he lived in Jersey.

But first he had to get it home. So he flew to Italy, collected the car from Maranello and, pausing only for the obligatory lunch in the Cavallino, set off for home. A stickler for obeying running-in instructions, he was still able to cruise at more than 100mph in the

early stages and then, after a few gratuitous detours took the mileage past 1000, rather more than that, for hours on end.

I then used it for our feature, after which it did briefly become his commuter car before he realised that, even in 1988, sitting in heavy traffic on the M1 isn't much fun whatever you're in. It was also the era of Thatcher's bull market, where any new Ferrari was a rapidly appreciating asset. Graypaul made him an offer he felt unable to refuse and the Testarossa was gone, never to be seen again. Or so I thought. **AF**

← from the £8k Graypaul spent getting it road ready again, it was as I'd last seen it in 1988. Could I borrow it for a few hours? It would be a pleasure.

It was odd seeing it there. Even now, it is the only Testarossa I have sat in. Yet I remembered it all, my fingers automatically finding the door handle under those dramatic side strakes, how to open the bonnet and engine cover, where to find the fly-off handbrake and how to adjust (rake only) the three-spoke steering wheel. I remembered also that when the gearbox oil is cold, you use second only with a slow double-declutch shift or, ideally, not at all.

In its day, the Testarossa was criticised for being so wide as to be barely usable, but it's about the same width as a 458, and few have complained about that. Now it feels almost compact and visibility is superb for a mid-engined car. The steering lock is



The 5.0-litre flat 12 is one of the greatest engines ever

This time around, the Testarossa could simply be enjoyed for its sound, looks and character



Ride quality is astonishing by the standards of today's stiffly sprung supercars; it still feels properly quick at speed



One last time: Frankel rekindles 27-year-old memories

exceptional and luggage space is vast. This would be a very easy car with which to live.

But I'm here to drive, and one twist of the key brings it all flooding back. Old-school Bosch mechanical injection ensures the engine fires instantly on all 12, so smooth there could be 24 in there. It's not a true 'boxer' flat 12 any more than was the Boxer's, because opposing pistons move in the same rather than different directions. It's actually a 180deg V12. It has four overhead camshafts and 48 valves, but only 390bhp, just half what the F12tdf has today on only 1.3 litres more.

Its civility still surprises. For culture and class, I'm not sure this engine has ever been beaten, but you'd be amazed by how quiet it is. And the Testarossa's ride quality would boil your brain. The old Ferrari breathes with every undulation in the road.

But does it still feel fast? Not at first. At low speeds, it feels rapid but no more – top-of-the-range Boxster pace at best, even if you use most of the 6800rpm it permits. What it retains is that weird old Ferrari ability to feel quicker the faster you go. Above about 80mph, it seems to break free from unseen shackles that have hitherto held it back. And, yes, here it still feels properly, exhilaratingly fast. This is a wide-open-space kind of car. To find such a road and row it along in third and fourth, savouring the scrape of that fabled open-gate gearshift, is to unearth a form of motoring pleasure lost to those who drive today's supercars.

This is not a world defined by numbers, be it a Nürburgring lap time, a 0-100mph sprint or maximum recorded lateral g force. It's about feeling the road surface replicated in the rim of the

steering wheel, engine noise not synthesised in some semi-anechoic laboratory but the combustion chambers of one of the greatest road car engines of all time. It's about your right foot being the only traction control you're going to get, adhesion limits you can actually understand and, above all, you being in control and on the stage, not sitting in the stalls bedazzled by a pyrotechnic light show in whose creation you played no part.

Back in 1988, my boss, the late Howard Lees, wrote about this very car: "The Testarossa emerged as a much better road car than I had been led to expect. It has towering performance, perfect manners and very good visibility; all that talk of it being too big is sheer nonsense. It's a car of genuine quality, worth every penny of £90,000."

At the time, I rather wished he'd been somewhat more fulsome in his praise, but now I think his words were fair enough. Even then, it wasn't one of the greatest supercars and wouldn't now make it onto anyone's list of the top 10 Ferraris of all time. But it was a good car, and I know that now because only good cars mature with age. Without exception in my experience, bad cars just get worse.

And this time around, the Testarossa wasn't just good; it was wonderful. With no need to prove itself any more, it could simply be enjoyed for its sound, looks, character and superbly relaxed attitude to the open road. I always knew this would be a day to enjoy, but not until I'd handed it back in the almost certain knowledge that I'll never see it again did I realise it would also be one to remember. **A**

HOW TO GO RACING

After a year in the Radical SR1 Cup, Autocar's F1 champ in waiting, **Mark Tisshaw**, reveals the tools you need to follow in his footsteps



My debut season as a driver in the Radical SR1 Cup ended exactly how it started: facing the wrong way halfway around the first corner of the race. But this time it wasn't my fault. Honest.

Unlike at the Silverstone curtain-raiser, where I was too eager on cold tyres, at Brands Hatch I was taken out in a pile-up caused by someone else struggling with the same issue.

That was that for the year, then. So after a season in a low-cost, entry-level championship for amateurs, here are some words of wisdom on how to (or how not to) follow in my footsteps and get yourself on the grid in 2016. Go on, you won't regret it.

TAKE IT ALL IN

The SR1 Cup is a straightforward, stress-free way to go racing. You hand over £37,500 (plus VAT) and you're

given an SR1 in return, a machine that's anything but amateur.

It weighs 480kg, is built around a spaceframe chassis and is yours to keep. Power comes from a 185bhp 1.3-litre four-cylinder Suzuki engine. It has a proper aero package, produces real downforce and can go from 0-60mph in 3.6sec and reach a 138mph top speed. Serious stuff.

Your money also gets you a race licence, a race suit, two pre-season tests that include practice race starts, a competitive pre-season track day and entry into all four rounds of the championship. There's also a spares truck and Radical experts on hand to help on the race weekend – or rather the race day, given that qualifying and the two races all take place on the same day to help keep costs down.

So when I say take it all in, all you have to do is take the plunge, hand over the cheque and then turn up.

SEEK HELP

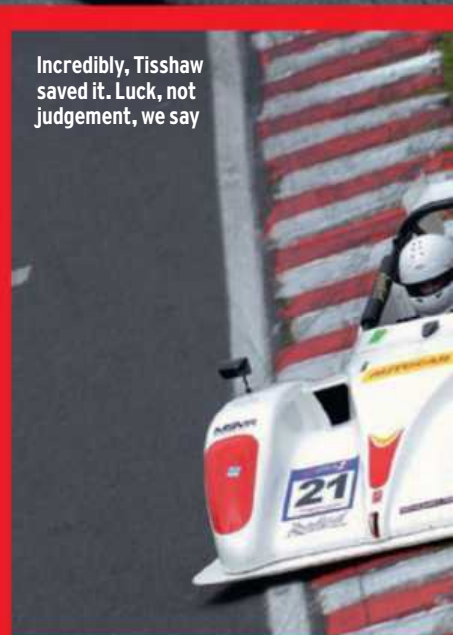
I mentioned above that there are Radical experts on hand to help you improve throughout the season. Make good use of them.

I attached myself to experienced Radical racer Roger Bromiley, and together we pored over hours of data and footage of my driving from the on-board cameras to analyse where I was going wrong and help me to go faster. Roger's advice was often worth seconds a lap. Don't be afraid – or too proud – to ask for help.

BUILD EXPERIENCE

Time in the car is crucial. It's intimidating to drive a race car for the first time – something I discovered when I spun the SR1 at the first corner of my first Snetterton test. So make sure you maximise track time and test days to get the most out of the car. It's the archetypal

Incredibly, Tisshaw saved it. Luck, not judgement, we say





All-in deal includes race-day support from the likes of Radical's Will Maddison (right)



TISSHAW'S RESULTS

SILVERSTONE GP

RACE	QUALIFIED	FINISHED
1	8th	13th
2	7th	6th

OULTON PARK GP

RACE	QUALIFIED	FINISHED
1	10th	6th
2	10th	DNF

SNETTERTON 300

RACE	QUALIFIED	FINISHED
1	5th	6th
2	8th	7th

BRAND HATCH GP

RACE	QUALIFIED	FINISHED
1	9th	9th
2	9th	DBF

CHAMPIONSHIP POSITION 7th



easy-to-learn, difficult-to-master car.

It takes confidence in both yourself and the machinery to keep pushing, to know that you can brake later, turn in harder and get on the gas earlier.

You'll also have to get used to downforce, a wonderful thing that lets you take quick corners (70mph-plus) faster than feels right. There's a limit, of course, but to find it, you must stop thinking "What if I can't go around the corner that fast?" and instead think "What if I can?". Another thing to understand is tyres and what they're telling you; a new set can be worth seconds a lap.

You'll have to learn your racecraft, too. For example, knowing when to attack an opponent or when it's best to sit back and wait for them to make a mistake is something that only comes with experience. There were certainly plenty of gung-ho rookie errors from car 21 this season.

ENJOY IT

No sport can match the intensity of being wheel to wheel with others at more than 100mph and with no margin for error. If you love the competitive nature of playing sport, you will love motor racing. It's the hardest sport I've ever experienced – and also the most addictive. I might need some cream for that bug bite.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

You can compete in the SR1 Cup for two seasons. After that, you can equip your SR1 with a dry sump and slick tyres and race in a mixture of sprint and endurance races against the big boys in the Radical Challenge. I've had a go on an SR1 on slicks, at which point it becomes even faster and more fun to drive, and it really progresses your driving. You can also take part in the Radical Festival at Spa in Belgium, or trade up to a

bigger, faster SR3 to progress up the racing ladder. Appetite whetted yet?

CHEQUERED FLAG

So what is it like to go racing? It's addictive, fast, challenging, exciting and competitive. It's sometimes terrifying, it occasionally hurts and is frequently frustrating but always rewarding. And, yes, anyone can do it and get up to speed pretty quickly.

The SR1 Cup is simply a great way to start your racing career. There's no faster rookie championship in the UK, nor one that offers such an all-encompassing package of racing and support for the cost. On a human level, you'll meet some great people along the way who race hard but fair and always shake your hand and have a laugh afterwards in *parc fermé*.

If Radical is foolish enough to let me back on the grid next year, I'll hopefully see you there. **A**

Mercedes CLA Shooting Brake

Mercedes miniaturises its 'added grace and space' estate concept

MODEL TESTED CLA200 CDI Sport Shooting Brake 7G-DCT

● Price £29,225 ● Power 134bhp ● Torque 221lb ft ● 0-60mph 10.1sec ● 30-70mph in fourth 10.3sec
● Fuel economy 53.0mpg ● CO₂ emissions 106g/km ● 70-0mph 58.7m

The CLA Shooting Brake is the fifth model in Mercedes-Benz's compact range, all based on the front-drive platform that underpins the A-Class hatchback. Like the saloon version, the CLA wagon is intended to offer buyers an extra-powerful hit of the design flair that originally made the larger CLS so popular. A similar trick seems to have worked for the CLA, with its maker rating the model's launch as one of the best in recent years, particularly in the United States, where small 'sedans' are generally preferred over hatchbacks.

The UK doesn't share the same

WE LIKE Distinctive styling ■ Rounded ride and handling ■ Plenty of usable boot space



● Dowdy old halogen reflectors for Sport trim. AMG Sport upgrades them to bi-xenons, with washers thrown into the bargain. DRLs are by way of Mercedes' familiar LED eyebrows.



● Single louvre is the most recognisable part of Merc's current front end, although it changes with trim levels; Sport gets a silver-painted one, AMG Sport goes for gloss black.



● Sport cars' beltline strips are chrome; AMG Sport gets gloss black. Subtle difference, but noticeable on the Shooting Brake with its dramatically tapering glasshouse.



● Interestingly, as standard, all trim levels bar the full-blooded CLA45 AMG get 18in wheels, albeit in different designs. See the OrangeArt model for the most eye-catching ones.

predilection, but it does tend to look favourably on small estates, and as a niche oversubscribed with mainstream workhorses, the implied luxury of a dashing Merc could be the ideal fix for those with slightly deeper pockets and two pedigree dogs to walk. Increased practicality, of course, is the pith beneath the shiny body, so the manufacturer singles out the Shooting Brake's increased spaciousness in comparison to the standard CLA as the substance on which to build a rational buying case.

It is this car's mixture of space, style and affordability that Mercedes is selling as new and, while Audi



The CLA shares the A-Class's platform

would disagree, it might have a point. The CLA was no ordinary compact premium player in the first place. The car is actually longer than the previous-generation C-Class, as well as significantly longer than many

of its hatch-based rivals – and that advantage in visual presence may help to convince buyers who pause to consider what else the model's £26k starting price could buy them.

At that entry level, the estate comes with a 1.6-litre petrol engine and a manual gearbox. Mercedes' Sport and AMG Sport trims will bulk out the majority of sales, with its 2.1-litre diesel engine (in 200 and 220 CDI forms) taking the spoils. Four-wheel drive is available too, most prominently in the CLA45, a 375bhp super-wagon. That's for another day, though. Here, we drive the 200 CDI in its most affordable guise.

DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

★★★★★

Coldly considering the Shooting Brake from its spec sheet is not the most helpful way to understand what it is. Like the CLA saloon that spawned it, the car doesn't quite measure up in terms of segment positioning, by which we mean it's too big and too expensive for one class and possibly a little too mediocre underneath for another. Better, then, to forget how you might characterise the model and simply →

WE DON'T LIKE Rear cabin still pokey ■ Various flawed powertrains ■ Typically high Mercedes pricing



● Rectangular twin-pipe exhaust finishers, in polished stainless steel, look more classy than sporty, albeit sufficiently racy to appear on upper-level variants as well.



● Rear quarter window and D-pillar give the Shooting Brake its distinctive profile. From the back, it's clear how much distinctive muscle Mercedes has designed into the body surfacing.



● The shoulder line dictates the shape of the rear clusters. The manufacturer describes their teardrop shape as 'elegant arrowheads' – or 'droopy 4am squint', as one tester preferred.



● Rear spoiler completes the elongated contour of the roofline and also contains all the car's ailerons. Useful to know when attempting to keep that Shooting Brake shape clean.



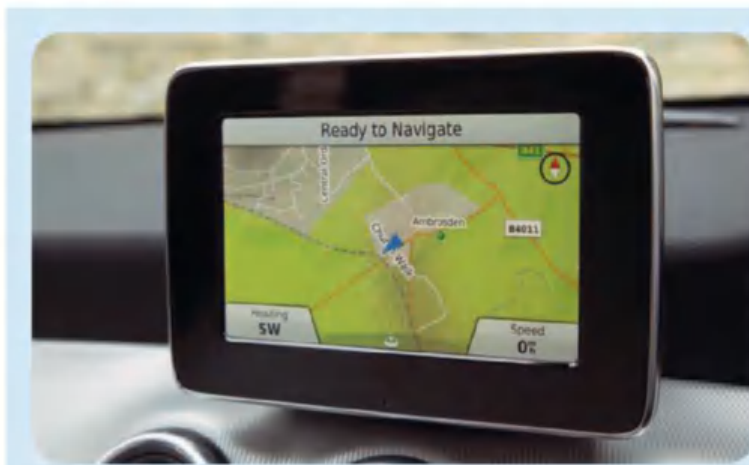
● Many cars have parking sensors, but Merc adds this guide to show how much space you've got to work with. It means you can turn off the bleepers.



● Column-mounted gear selector makes space for this lidded cubby in the centre console. Removable inner makes it useful as a waste bin.



● Material quality is good; ergonomics are mixed. Parking brake hides by your right knee. It's push to activate, instead of the more intuitive pull.



MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM

It's not often we get a chance to test a Mercedes that isn't fitted with its full-house Comand multimedia navigation system, but the CLA Shooting Brake afforded one. In entry-level Sport trim it gets Merc's six-speaker 'Audio 20 radio/CD' set-up, which sounds powerful and clear enough for most purposes. The Bluetooth phone connection is easy to establish but only produces averagely good call audio quality.

The infotainment system works through a rotary controller and a 7.0in free-standing display on the dashboard. Our test car

had Mercedes' Garmin Map Pilot navigation system fitted – a reasonably priced solution (£495) with decent but not outstanding graphics, if a little slow to render.

The usability of the system is a tad confusing; the rotary controller is mainly only useful for the nav menus and won't allow you to navigate away to the radio and phone screens.

Upgrading to the Comand Online system is pricey at £1870, but it gets you an 8.0in control display, live traffic information and access to internet radio and social media channels via bundled apps. DAB digital radio is another £420.

← decide whether you like its looks.

And that is what Mercedes intends you to do. A C-Class estate, after all, is slightly bigger, more sophisticated and only modestly more expensive, but it has a more conventional shape. Mercedes wants the CLA to make sense less than it wants you to simply want one. That decision made – typically on the basis of the plunging D-pillars used to great acclaim on the CLS – Mercedes will furnish you with the facts to back it up.

Several of these are no-brainers. A wagon's profile means that the Shooting Brake's back-row occupants should get 40mm more head room compared with the CLA saloon, while rear access is a little easier because the doors are slightly bigger. Load space swells too, with 495 litres (a quoted capacity five litres superior to that of the C-Class) now on offer with the rear seats up and 1354 litres in total with them down.

Underneath it all, the front-drive architecture is carried over from the saloon, as is the MacPherson strut front suspension and the multi-link rear. The suspension is available in three different tunes: comfort, lowered comfort and the lowered sport springs of Engineered by AMG trim. Opting for anything other than

straight comfort means a 15mm drop at the front axle and 10mm at the rear – a fate our test car was mercifully spared. No matter which set-up you choose, every CLA comes with Mercedes' Sports Direct Steer variable-ratio electric power steering.

Like the saloon, the Shooting Brake comes with either a 1.6 or 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol engine or the 2.1-litre diesel unit, subdivided into 134bhp or 174bhp for the 200 CDI and 220 CDI respectively. The latter comes only with the 7G-DCT dual-clutch automatic gearbox (an option on the otherwise six-speed manual 200 CDI). The 220 CDI is also the only diesel offered with Mercedes' 4Matic all-wheel drive system, which sends torque to the back axle via a rear mounted multi-plate clutch when it deems necessary.

INTERIOR



Given that the Shooting Brake shares its wheelbase and overall length with the CLA saloon and isn't likely to match a more conventional wagon on outright boot space due to that steeply raked tailgate, we should first address how much estate car →



● Squeezing in between the B-pillar and steering wheel can be tight, but cabin space up front is adequate and the steering column adjusts generously.

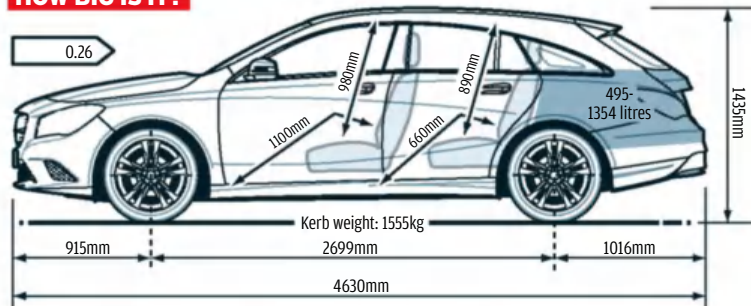


● Back seat is tight on both head and leg room for adults, and really a two-seater only, despite the presence of a third, middle seatbelt.



● Load bay is very accessible – aided by a standard powered tailgate – and big on length. Tapered opening could make loading bulky items difficult, though.

HOW BIG IS IT?



VISIBILITY

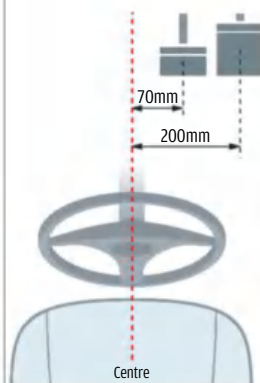
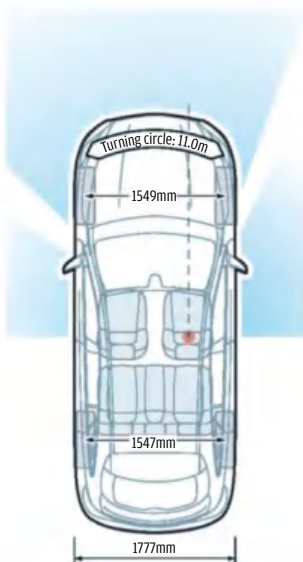
Closeness of the B-pillar limits over-shoulder view, but forwards view is good – and likewise that to the rear.

HEADLIGHTS

Entry-level Sport cars get halogens as standard; they are respectable on brightness and range. AMG Sport cars get bi-xenons.

WHEEL AND PEDAL ALIGNMENT

Right-sided bias of the accelerator pedal may be noticeable, but the brake pedal is wide and well placed. Steering wheel has to be placed a little too high for comfort for a clear view of the instruments.



◀ there really is on offer here.

Front-row occupant space is certainly competitive but, moving backwards, our tape measure recorded 660mm of typical rear leg room and just under 900mm of second-row head room. The latter is particularly disappointing, given the 40mm gain claimed by Mercedes compared with the CLA saloon (which measured up almost identically for us on head room).

Regrettably, the difference made to the CLA's passenger-carrying abilities is negligible. Integrated headrests and pronounced bolstering for the outer seats makes the back row useful for two occupants only – and smaller occupants at that. Once you're in, larger adults will find the car tighter on both knee room and head room than plenty of conventional five-door hatchbacks in the compact premium class.

But looking at the cargo bay will give prospective CLA Shooting Brake owners better news. Outright volume

is about 100 litres shy of the estate car norm, at 495 litres with the seats in place and up to the window line. But that bald statistic actually does little to describe the usable space available. Compared with, say, a Volvo V40 hatchback, the CLA Shooting Brake provides an additional 250mm of loading length behind the seatbacks. The car's tapered hatchback and consequently narrow loading lip could make accommodating bulky items tricky, but there's good boot width inside it, while 60/40 folding rear seatbacks split conveniently in order to make optimal through-loading space in a right-hand drive car (which you don't get, incidentally, in an Audi A3 Sportback).

The rest of the CLA Shooting Brake's cabin is carried over mostly unchanged from the saloon. You get slightly narrow but comfortable sports seats as standard and some appealing design touches such as red-accented instrument needles, wave-look silver fascia trim and

feature air vents. The car's driving position is good, save for a minor pedal offset, and its material quality levels are high.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★☆

After our 2013 road test of the CLA220 CDI saloon granted a chance to get to know the car in higher-output diesel form and on lowered springs, we now have a chance for a more pragmatic combination to demonstrate its mettle.

The CLA200 CDI uses a detuned version of the same 2.1-litre diesel engine as the C220, and it betrays that relationship the instant you start it up through equally poor mechanical refinement. Clattery from the outside and unusually gravelly and uncouth from behind the wheel, the Shooting Brake's engine fails to make the sophisticated first impression that owners may be

expecting of it. In that respect, opting for a lower specific output than in the C220 gets you nowhere with this car. And for us, the diesel's coarseness only serves to underline the need for Mercedes to invest in an all-new family of compact and economical four-cylinder diesel engines as soon as possible, in order to keep pace with its German and British-built rivals.

Move off and your perception of the car improves. However noisy that engine seems, it is at least decently smooth, with little in the way of vibration in evidence through the seat and controls. Outright performance levels are respectable, with our 10.1sec 0-60mph time recorded in wet conditions and Mercedes' 9.9sec 0-62mph claim, however undistinguished, looking achievable in the dry.

The car's diesel engine offers a broad tranche of peak torque and, although it doesn't rev as keenly as some, is flexible and potent enough at high revs for comfortable overtaking.

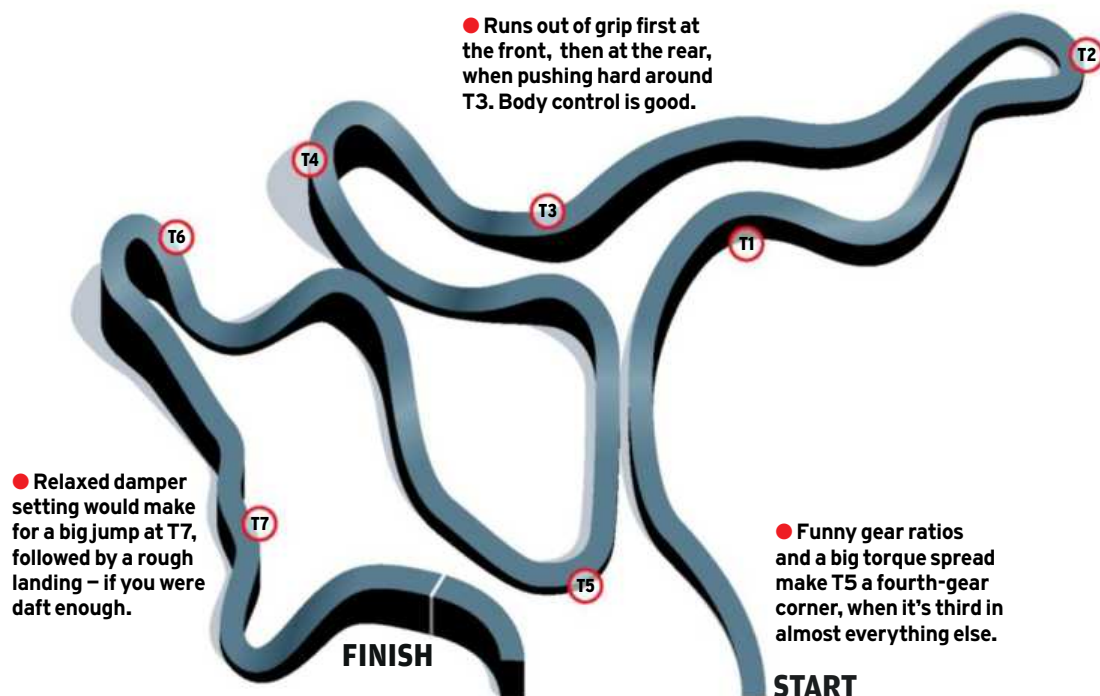
TRACK NOTES

Hard driving only serves to confirm the impression the CLA Shooting Brake gives at lower speeds: that it doesn't need firmer or shorter suspension springs, or bigger wheels and tyres, to retain its dynamic poise.

Carrying big speeds into corners leads you to find the limit of the car's lateral grip levels before it runs out of body control – although even here, the car retains decent cornering balance. It turns in keenly, rolling just enough to transfer its mass helpfully to its outside rear wheel and arcing in a balanced fashion from apex to exit rather than running wide.

The odd spacing of the ratios in the car's gearbox means you'll need one downshift fewer than you might first expect for any given corner or gradient. Happily, the transmission gives them up fairly freely in manual mode – provided you don't ask it to shift within 800rpm of the redline.

The car's ESP system is a little overactive, as is the norm from Mercedes, but it functions well enough.



ACCELERATION

Mercedes-Benz CLA200 CDI Sport Shooting Brake 7G-DCT 13deg C, damp

Standing quarter mile 17.8sec at 81.1mph, standing km 32.1sec at 102.9mph, 30-70mph 9.6sec, 30-70mph in fourth 10.3sec



Volvo V40 D3 (2012) 14deg C, dry

Standing quarter mile 16.9sec at 83.2mph, standing km 30.9sec at 105.1mph, 30-70mph 8.7sec, 30-70mph in fourth 11.4sec



BRAKING 60-0mph: 3.41sec



The standard 18in wheels transmit some bumps into the cabin



It's heartening to find a more balanced dynamic compromise on the CLA's baseline comfort settings

But Mercedes' optional seven-speed dual-clutch automatic gearbox seems an unflattering fit for it, just as it seemed two years ago for the C220 saloon. Although adequate and functional under modest throttle openings, it flounders once you ask it to operate briskly, being slow to engage at initial step-off, slow at times to kick down and managing its clutches quite abruptly.

The gearbox is better in manual mode, although even here the unintuitive spacing of its ratios can trip you up, while it can be downright trying with its hesitancy when manoeuvring. It wastes few opportunities to remind you that it's incapable of changing gears as smoothly as you could yourself – which is surely the cardinal sin of any two-pedal transmission.

RIDE AND HANDLING



The CLA Shooting Brake, like its four-door sibling, offers comfort, lowered comfort and lowered sport suspension tunes, fitted as standard to entry-level, mid-level and top-level

Engineered by AMG trim levels respectively. And given that we found the lowered comfort tune skittish and uncompliant when we sampled it on the CLA saloon, it's heartening to find a more balanced dynamic compromise here on the range's baseline comfort setting.

While it still has its shortcomings, the CLA's ride is much more supple, and its handling more natural, thus configured. The damping is fairly gentle, just as it should be for a bias towards refinement, and allows its wheels plenty of vertical travel when absorbing bigger lumps and bumps in the road without disturbing the body too much. Body roll is distantly present in the handling mix but doesn't prevent the car from steering crisply and cornering with poise.

Those standard 18in rims feel a size too big for the car at times, causing the suspension to thump over sharper edges and making for notable road roar over coarser surfaces. But they also grant a nicely judged lateral grip level, which is sweetly balanced between the axles.

Mercedes fits its variable-ratio Direct Steer steering set-up to the CLA as standard. It is a passive

system that becomes more direct off-centre. We've found it a mixed blessing in stiffer-sprung, bigger-tyred applications, but in the entry-level Shooting Brake's case it didn't feel so woolly or drowning in power assistance as it has elsewhere, instead allowing weight to build helpfully with lateral load and communicating grip levels well.

The upshot of all of this confirms what we've long suspected about Mercedes' new-generation compact cars: that they're at their rounded best and most enjoyable on the road in unadulterated specification, and that they are lowered, stiffened and endowed with larger-diameter wheel rims at considerable cost.

BUYING AND OWNING



Whether you consider the Shooting Brake's pricing to be canny or cock-eyed will likely depend on how much you like its looks. As with the saloon, most examples will be sold in either Sport or AMG Sport trim.

The car tested had 18in alloys, park assist, rain-sensing wipers, cruise

control, sports seats and automatic dual-zone air-con as standard. With the automatic gearbox, the 200 CDI starts on the high side of £29k – a sum that would almost stretch to an Audi A4 estate or BMW 318d Touring, and with a C-Class wagon only a couple of grand dearer.

Dip your toe back into hatchbacks and the choice is even broader. Not only could you have almost any diesel Volkswagen Golf estate you wanted (ditto the Audi A3 Sportback), but the handsome new Golf Alltrack – with its standard all-wheel drive versatility – would also be within reach. The same could be said for the Volvo V40 D4, a car with the added benefit of a class-leading oil-burner.

The 200 CDI trails in the Volvo's wake on fuel economy, although its 106g/km CO₂ emissions figure and 68.9mpg combined claim are respectable quotations as far as they go – which is not tremendously far, given that our test car's True MPG average finished up at 53.0mpg, representing a 23% reduction in claimed economy. That lands the CLA Shooting Brake with what could be called middling running costs – for a premium price. →

MERCEDES CLA200 CDI SPORT SHOOTING BRAKE

On-the-road price	£29,225
Price as tested	£31,210
Value after 3yrs/36k miles	£14,325
Contract hire pcm	£343.51
Cost per mile	51.5p
Insurance/typical quote	24/£685

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

18in alloy wheels in Himalaya Grey	■
Active Park Assist with Parktronic	■
Powered tailgate	■
Rain-sensing wipers	■
Cruise control with speed limiter	■
Part-leather sports seats	■
Dual-zone climate control	■
7.0in infotainment system with six-speaker audio	■
Mountain Grey metallic paint	£660
Reversing camera	£300
Heated front seats	£300
Privacy glass	£230
Garmin Map Pilot navigation	£495
Options in bold listed to test car	
■ = Standard na = not available	

RANGE AT A GLANCE

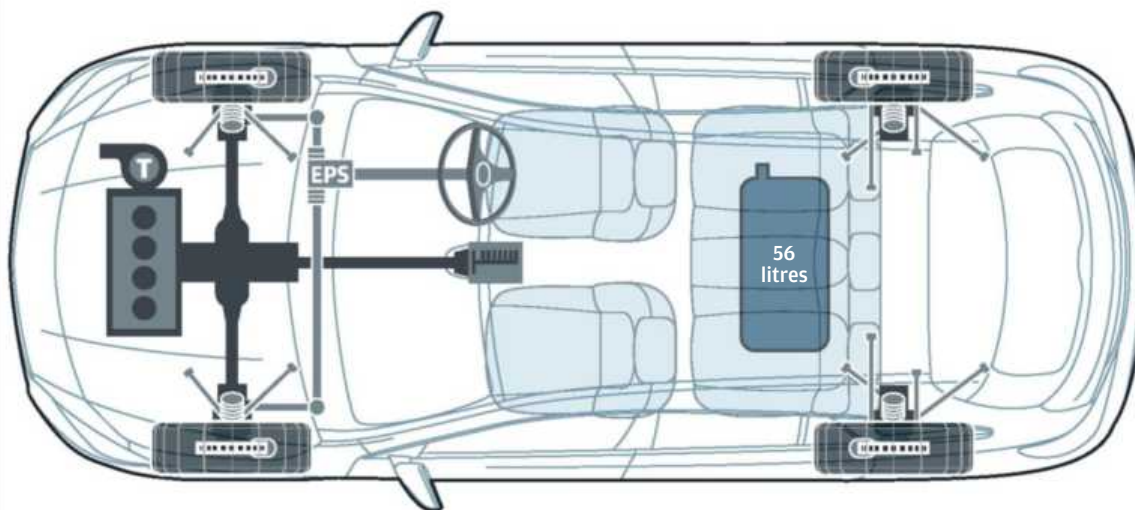
ENGINES	POWER	FROM
1.6 180 Sport	120bhp	£26,030
2.0 250 AMG	215bhp	£32,130
2.1 200 CDI Sport	134bhp	£28,050
2.1 220 CDI Sport	174bhp	£30,930
2.0 45 AMG 4Matic	376bhp	£43,510

TRANSMISSIONS

7-spd dual-clutch automatic ■

TECHNICAL LAYOUT

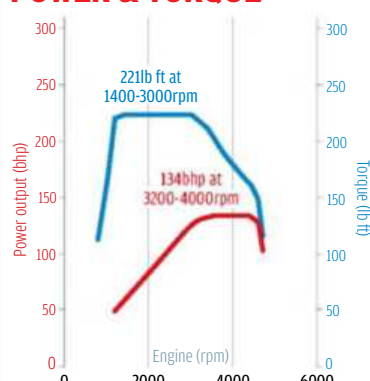
Mercedes' compact car platform, shared with the A, B and GLA-Classes, imposes a transverse engine and in-line manual or dual-clutch automatic gearboxes and either front or four-wheel drive. The Shooting Brake's body is identical on length, width and wheelbase to the CLA four-door, but marginally taller.



ENGINE

Installation	Front, transverse, front-wheel drive
Type	4 cyls in line, 2143cc, diesel
Made of	Iron block, aluminium head
Bore/stroke	83.0mm/99.0mm
Compression ratio	16.2:1
Valve gear	4 per cyl
Power	134bhp at 3400-4400rpm
Torque	221lb ft at 1400-3000rpm
Red line	4800rpm
Power to weight	86bhp per tonne
Torque to weight	142lb ft per tonne
Specific output	63bhp per litre

POWER & TORQUE



CHASSIS & BODY

Construction	Steel monocoque
Weight/as tested	1555kg/na
Drag coefficient	0.26
Wheels	7.5Jx18in
Tyres	225/40 R18, Continental ContiSport Contact 5
Spare	Repair kit

TRANSMISSION

Type	7-spd dual-clutch automatic
Ratios/mph per 1000rpm	1st 3.86/4.2 2nd 2.43/6.7 3rd 2.67/10.5 4th 1.05/15.4 5th 0.78/20.8 6th 1.05/26.8 7th 0.84/33.5
Final drive ratios	4.6:1 (1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th), 2.65:1 (3rd, 6th, 7th)

ECONOMY

TEST (TRUE MPG)	Urban	47.1mpg
	Extra-urban	58.8mpg
	Average	53.0mpg
CLAIMED	Urban	58.9mpg
	Extra-urban	78.5mpg
	Combined	68.9mpg
	Tank size	56 litres
	Test range	653 miles

SUSPENSION

Front MacPherson strut, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Rear Multi-link, coil springs, anti-roll bar

STEERING

Type	Electromechanical, rack and pinion
Turns lock to lock	2.4
Turning circle	11.0m

BRAKES

Front	295mm ventilated discs
Rear	295mm ventilated discs
Anti-lock	Standard, with Brake Assist

CABIN NOISE

Idle 45dB Max revs in third gear 72dB
30mph 62dB 50mph 66dB 70mph 68dB

SAFETY

ABS, ESP, HBA, Collision Prevention Assist Plus
Euro NCAP crash rating 5 stars (2013; saloon)
Adult occupant 91%, child occupant 75%, pedestrian 74%, safety assist 81%

EMISSIONS & TAX

CO ₂ emissions	106g/km
Tax at 20/40% pcm	£93/£185

ACCELERATION

MPH	TIME (sec)
0-30	3.7
0-40	5.3
0-50	7.6
0-60	10.1
0-70	13.3
0-80	17.3
0-90	22.4
0-100	29.7
0-110	39.4
0-120	-
0-130	-
0-140	-
0-150	-
0-160	-

ACCELERATION IN GEAR

MPH	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
20-40	-	3.2	4.8	-	-	-
30-50	-	3.8	4.5	6.3	-	-
40-60	-	-	4.8	6.4	8.1	-
50-70	-	-	5.8	6.8	8.7	11.9
60-80	-	-	-	7.6	9.7	13.7
70-90	-	-	-	9.2	11.3	16.3
80-100	-	-	-	12.9	12.8	-
90-110	-	-	-	-	-	-
100-120	-	-	-	-	-	-
110-130	-	-	-	-	-	-
120-140	-	-	-	-	-	-
130-150	-	-	-	-	-	-
140-160	-	-	-	-	-	-

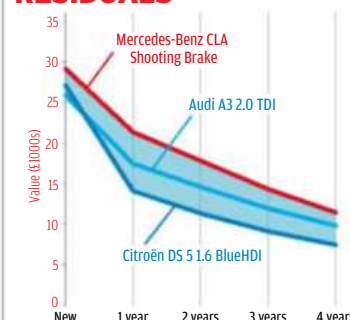
MAX SPEEDS IN GEAR

1	20mph 4800rpm
2	32mph 4800rpm
3	50mph 4800rpm
4	74mph 4800rpm
5	100mph 4800rpm
6	129mph 4800rpm
7	134mph* 4000rpm

*claimed

RPM in 7th at 70/80mph = 2090/2388

RESIDUALS



● Strong RVs should mitigate the CLA's high price somewhat for both fleet users and private buyers.

THE SMALL PRINT Power-to-weight and torque-to-weight figures are calculated using manufacturer's claimed kerb weight. © 2015, Haymarket Media Group Ltd. Test results may not be reproduced without editor's written permission. For information on the CLA Shooting Brake, contact Mercedes-Benz UK Ltd, Delaware Drive, Tongwell, Milton Keynes MK15 8BA (08081 565 635, mercedes-benz.co.uk). Cost-per-mile figures calculated over three years/36,000 miles, including depreciation and maintenance but not insurance; Lex Autolease (0800 389 3690). Insurance quote covers 35-year-old professional male with clean licence and full no-claims bonus living in Swindon; quote from Liverpool Victoria (0800 066 5161, lv.com). Contract hire figure based on a three-year lease/36,000-mile contract including maintenance; Wessex Fleet Solutions (01722 322888).

AUTOCAR ROAD TEST
Read all of our road tests autocar.co.uk

Mercedes CLA Shooting Brake

AUTOCAR VERDICT ★★★★★

Inventive and handsome but not such a pretty thing to drive



The CLA Shooting Brake feels like a good idea in need of better execution. Plugging the gap between the hatchback and estate with something better looking and more desirable than either is niche product design everyone can get behind. A similar tack produced the superb CLS Shooting Brake, but here – not least due to a below-par engine and gearbox – is something alternative and appealing on the face of it but undercooked underneath.

With more elegant, alluring styling, more balanced and rounded handling and a more supple ride, this car answers some the criticisms we had of the CLA saloon – but not enough of them. Like its four-door sister car, it fails to offer competitive passenger space – and, while fairly frugal, it is much too unrefined and undistinguished on performance to justify its lofty price tag.

It gets a warmer welcome to our rankings than the CLA saloon, then, but only by half a star.

TESTERS' NOTES


NIC CACKETT
I prefer the Shooting Brake's 'old' infotainment controller to the new one installed in the C-Class. Glossily intuitive it isn't – yet I found the air didn't turn nearly as blue while inputting directions into the sat-nav.



MATT SAUNDERS
It'd take me a long time to get used to Merc's 7G-DCT gearbox. Around town, it's as if first and second gears hardly exist. You're in third before 20mph has come up – wondering, for the most part, why you're not simply travelling more quickly.

SPEC ADVICE

Stick with Sport trim and comfort suspension, although with the 220 CDI almost two full seconds quicker to 62mph and very nearly as efficient, we'd pay the £1430 premium for the higher output.

JOB FOR THE FACELIFT

- Revisit the lower intermediate ratio spacing and the shift logic in the auto 'box'.
- Quieten down that engine. A lot.
- Make some more second-row passenger space.

AUTOCAR ROAD TEST TOP5

MAKE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Model	VOLKSWAGEN Golf Estate 2.0 TDI GT DSG	AUDI A3 S'back TDI 150 Sport S tronic	VOLVO V40 D3 R-Design Lux G'tronic	MERCEDES-BENZ CLA200 CDI Sport S'ing Brake	PEUGEOT 308 SW 2.0 BlueHdi GT auto
Price	£26,885	£25,965	£28,655	£29,225	£26,845
Power	148bhp at 3500rpm	148bhp at 3500rpm	148bhp at 3750rpm	134bhp at 3400-4400rpm	178bhp at 3750rpm
Torque	236lb ft at 1750rpm	251lb ft at 1750rpm	236lb ft at 1750rpm	221lb ft at 1400-3000rpm	295lb ft at 2000rpm
0-60mph	8.9sec (claimed, to 62mph)	8.3sec (claimed, to 62mph)	8.4sec (claimed, to 62mph)	10.1sec	8.6sec (claimed, to 62mph)
Top speed (claimed)	134mph	135mph	130mph	134mph	135mph
Fuel economy (combined)	61.4mpg	62.8mpg	74.3mpg	68.9mpg	68.9mpg
Kerb weight (claimed)	1454kg	1395kg	1561kg	1555kg	1425kg
CO₂/tax band	120g/km, 22%	119g/km, 21%	99g/km, 17%	106g/km, 19%	107g/km, 19%
Verdicts on every new car, p76	Desirable, solid, flawlessly laid out and good to drive. Trumps the Merc on boot space, too. ★★★★★	Quality cabin and peppery engine. A disinterested drivers' fave; low added practicality. ★★★★★	Another one that's more hatch than wagon. Not spacious but frugal and slick to drive. ★★★★★	Eye-catching design, only averagely good execution. Big boot, tidy handling. ★★★★★	Lacking kerb appeal, but strong powertrain and roomy boot make up the shortfall. ★★★★★

LETTER OF THE WEEK

A concept to kill for

Vicky Parrott's opinion about Bond cars hits the nail on the head (Blog, 31 October). On the one hand, it's great to boost the brand image by having a car play such a big role in a huge film, but on the other hand it would be crazy to put them into production, as Parrott points out. Perhaps it's best that the cars remain concepts.

In Jaguar's case with the C-X75, the manufacturer should concentrate on high-margin mainstream products such as the XJ replacement and another small sports SUV. Plus possibly a two-door coupé of the XE or XF, as real-world 'halo' models, to compete in the market against rivals such as the BMW 4 Series and 6 Series.

Also, Parrott cites the Jaguar C-X75 as being a modern XJ220, but to me it looks a modern XJ13.

Donald MacKay
Inverness



WIN

Letter of the week wins a
ValetPRO exterior protection
and maintenance kit worth £58.95

Valet PRO
PROFESSIONAL VALETING SUPPLIES

NEW BULB OR BUST

As the clocks change and bring darker evenings, I am reminded that the fashion for driving with just one working headlight is still with us.

My own record of one-eyed sightings on my short 20-mile commute is no less than 32 vehicles in one trip, including one HGV, a bus and an ambulance.

I suppose the difficulty of changing a bulb on a modern car, plus the lack of police enforcement, must both contribute to this disturbing trend.

Luckily, a good few drivers helpfully put their front foglights on in clear conditions to counteract their headlight deficiency. It's cheaper than replacing a bulb, I guess.

A vehicle with just one headlight can easily be mistaken for a motorbike, with potentially tragic consequences.

Guy Maylam
via email

INSPIRATION FOR INFINITI

While in Lisbon, I came across the press launch for the new Infiniti Q30.

My first thought upon seeing the car in the metal was how different and fresh it looked, fitting in particularly well in the seafront area of Lisbon.

How disappointing, then, to come home and find that the review only gives the car three and a half stars (First Drives, 4 November).

When will manufacturers such as Infiniti truly understand that to compete with the likes of BMW and Audi, they have to pull out all the stops?

Lexus has never really managed, and Volvo has only just got the hang of it.

My advice? Take a leaf out of Jaguar's book and throw everything you've got at it. Then, like the XE and XF, you'll lead the class.

Nick Chapman
Hereford, Herefordshire



Infiniti must try harder to beat its rivals

high-prestige models to appear humble is a foolhardy strategy if these are the highest profit margin endeavours.

Now it is trying to achieve more with less, or at least give the impression it is going to be doing more. Is this where the money is? VW must be careful not to get on the road to going bust.

Patrik Askert
via email

VW HAS NO MARGIN FOR ERROR

I don't understand VW's strategy in the aftermath of the emissions scandal.

Is it looking to demonstratively say "we're really sorry" by creating a new greener-than-green image, or is it looking to stay afloat as a trading group of companies by reducing costs and focusing on its most profitable areas? It seems that it's doing neither.

Are EVs and plug-ins really what most buyers currently want? Canning

COMMON NONSENSE REVISITED

So Angus MacEachran will not buy a VW product because of the emissions scandal (Your Views, 28 October).

The common-sense view is that lots of corporations may cheat if it pays to do so and they think they can get away with it. So what MacEachran is saying is that he prefers to buy from a manufacturer that has not been found out for whatever it has done to one that has been found out.

This would be a sound decision if being

AUTOCAR

What you're saying on autocar.co.uk

£200k Range Rover to fight Bentayga

Should it be a Range Rover that takes the fight to the Bentayga? Something with a Jaguar nameplate might be a better fit.
wmb



A reskinned Range Rover styled along the lines of an extra-large Jaguar F-Pace could be a winner. The Range Rover brand is most capable of commanding a £200,000 price tag.
scrap

I'm more interested in the new Defender. I'm still holding out hope for a replacement that's true to the Defender moniker.
Will86

The Bentayga is a huge opportunity for Jaguar Land Rover to move the next Range Rover even further upmarket.
TBC

Alfa Romeo Giulia: door handles on show and all the better for it





Should GM rethink its decision not to bring the new Volt to Europe?

smart at risk assessment meant you make better cars.

Ruppert's common-sense view (Deals, 14 October) is to ignore the scandal and buy the best car for your needs, although in his case – and mine – it means buying about fifth-hand, not new.

Roderick W Ramage
Coppenhall, Staffordshire

ABSENT AMPERA

The news from Vauxhall over the past few weeks has been encouraging. The new Astra has taken some steps up the ladder to compete with the Ford Focus and Volkswagen Golf ('Vaux Pops', 7 October), and the three new SUVs look promising (News, 28 October), but how can they make such a fundamental mistake with the Ampera?

I saw the new Chevrolet Volt during a visit to the US and, as a current Ampera owner, I can say it's an improvement

on an already exceptional vehicle.

I don't understand why it's not being imported to Europe. The decision leaves Vauxhall almost alone among Europe's mainstream car makers in not having an electric or hybrid model in its range.

I would be interested to hear from GM Europe on its reasoning behind this crazy decision, and, in the light of the current diesel crisis, how they now feel about that choice.

Andy Latham
via email

ATTRACTIVE ALFAS

In reply to Simon Grice (Your Views, 28 October), I agree the Alfa Romeo 156 maybe started a trend for hidden rear door handles, but luckily Alfa gave it up with the 159 and now the Giulia. Incidentally, all are good-looking cars and much better off without that fad.

Graham Lillis
via email

ROUGH RIDER

It's about time your road tests included an objective measure of ride quality. Speed, acceleration, noise and space have all been comparable between road tests for years. Why not ride quality?

It can't be beyond the wit of a test facility to come up with a 'jiggleometer' or similar. Perhaps you could use a Citroën 2CV as the benchmark and grade everything better or worse than that.

I am constantly disappointed by the ride quality, and road noise, of new cars. Until things improve, my wallet will stay hidden and I will continue to enjoy my 1995 Toyota on its 70-section tyres.

Mark Pollard
via email

Ride quality is a key element on all the cars we test. We may not quantify it with a numerical value, but we always detail how the ride compares with other cars in the class – DR



NEXT WEEK

Inside the magazine – on sale 25 November

COMPARISON



Audi vs Porsche New R8 is faster than the 911 Turbo, but does that make it better?



FIRST DRIVE

Seat Ibiza Cupra
Refreshed hot hatch has a new 1.8-litre turbo engine. We try it



MOTORSPORT

Mitsubishi's plug-in rally car
Why the Outlander PHEV is going cross-country rally racing

ROAD TEST



Mini Clubman Does bigger mean better? Our expert testers assess Mini's new estate

CONTENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

OUR CARS

A week in the life of Autocar's fleet

AUDI TT	BMW ACTIVE TOURER	BMW M4	CITROËN C4 CACTUS	FIAT 500X	FORD FOCUS	FORD MONDEO	JAGUAR XE	LAND ROVER DEFENDER
Stan Papior	John Bradshaw	Dan Trent	Lewis Kingston	Michele Hall	Tim Dickinson	Luc Lacey	Darren Moss	Matt Prior

Porsche Panamera

FINAL REPORT Six months and 8000 miles with our plug-in hybrid behemoth have shown why this model is proving to be such a popular choice among well-heeled company directors



It's easy to be cynical about cars like the Porsche Panamera S E-Hybrid. There's simply no way, for example, that a vehicle of this size and weight can get anywhere close to its official fuel economy in the real world. It's green by Porsche standards, but it's not about to save the planet.

Indeed, the fact that one in four Panameras sold in the UK is a hybrid is as much down to the tax breaks – and the ability for companies to write off the entire first-year cost of the vehicle

– as any real-world environmental credentials. When all's said and done, it's a potentially cheaper way for company owners to get themselves into an interesting, high-tech, luxurious and (whisper it) rapid saloon. Cynical or not, after six months in one, we can see the appeal of that.

To recap, the Panamera S E-Hybrid has a 3.0-litre supercharged V6 petrol engine producing 328bhp and 324lb ft, and an electric motor with 94bhp and 228lb ft. Combined, the powertrain

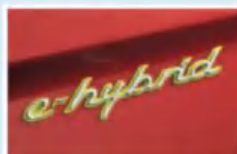
produces 410bhp and 435lb ft between 1250rpm and 4000rpm. Depending on which of the car's modes you select, you can let it decide whether to kick in the electric motor and switch off the combustion engine, or force the petrol unit to run to top up the batteries.

You can even experience the slightly odd sensation of driving a behemoth of a five-door (it's five metres long, for Pete's sake, and is more than 300kg heavier than a regular Panamera, at 2095kg) in pure electric mode. Porsche

claims it can do this for about 20-odd miles – enough, you assume, for you to use the EV setting to drive through any city centre that's decided to clamp down on anything with a working exhaust.

You pay for all this, though. The standard price of a Panamera hybrid is £88,401 – and it doesn't take many options to send it rocketing up from that figure. Our car, specced by Porsche, had a fetching metallic paint scheme and gloss black alloy wheels that split opinion throughout the office (some

LOVE IT



HYBRID TECH

Not flawless, but does a fine job of flicking the V6 on and off without you realising it.



CABIN

Four adults can sit in real comfort. Beautifully finished and solidly built.



FAST CRUISING ABILITY

Feels built for ludicrous autobahn speeds. Impressively stable.

LOATHE IT



20IN WHEELS

Gloss black wheels gave it a 'drug dealer' look; didn't help road noise, either.



BOOT SPACE

Takes a hit due to hybrid tech, but a car this big should have a larger boot.

LEXUS NX300H	MAZDA CX-3	MAZDA MX-5	McLAREN 650S SPIDER	MERCEDES-BENZ E-CLASS ESTATE	PORSCHE PANAMERA	RANGE ROVER SPORT	RENAULT TWINGO	SKODA FABIA	SKODA OCTAVIA	SSANGYONG TIVOLI	SUZUKI CELERIO	VAUXHALL CORSA VXR	VOLKSWAGEN GOLF R
Mark Pearson	Mel Falconer	Matthew Burrow	Mark Tisshaw	Andrew Frankel	John McIlroy	Steve Cropley	Matthew Burrow	Tom Webster	Matt Burt	John McIlroy	Steve Cropley	Mark Tisshaw	Allan Muir

This is a heavy car, but it's brisk and has good body control



Such a cabin helps make the miles slip by unnoticed and quickly



Half a day at Silverstone was included



Hybrid set-up gives 20 miles' EV range

TEST DATA

PORSCHE Panamera S E-Hybrid

TEST STARTED 21.4.15

Mileage at start	2053
Mileage at end	10,024

PRICES

List price then	£88,401
List price now	£89,327
Price as tested	£93,498
Dealer value now	£73,135
Private value now	£70,710
Trade value now	£67,213

OPTIONS

Black 20in wheels £3134, adaptive sports seats £2276, LED headlights £1907, metallic paint £851, Sport Chrono Package £576, Universal Audio Interface £224, online services £129

CONSUMPTION AND RANGE

Claimed economy	91.1mpg
Fuel tank	80 litres
Test average	34.1mpg
Test best	52.3mpg
Test worst	25.9mpg
Real-world range	600 miles

TECH HIGHLIGHTS

0-62mph	5.5sec
Top speed	168mph
Engine	V6, 2995cc, supercharged, petrol, plus electric motor
Max power (combined)	410bhp
Max torque (combined)	435lb ft
Transmission	8-spd automatic
Boot	335 litres
Wheels	9.5Jx20in (f), 11Jx20in (r)
Tyres	255/40 R20 (f), 295/35 R20 (r)
Weight	2095kg

SERVICE AND RUNNING COSTS

Contract hire rate	£1250
CO ₂	71g/km
Fuel costs	£1181.91
Service/other costs	Nil
Cost per mile	14.8p
Depreciation	£26,285
Cost per mile inc dep'n	£3.43
Faults	None

PREVIOUS REPORTS

13 May, 27 May, 17 Jun, 22 Jul, 12 Aug, 2 Sep, 7 Oct, 21 Oct

thought they were cool, others that they made the car look like it was owned by your friendly neighbourhood stockist of illicit substances), plus superb sports seats and a few other extras, taking the final total to £93,498. Again, you can see why so many company owners decide to buy the hybrid instead of a GTS or a diesel.

Picking up a Panamera feels pretty much like picking up your Cayenne Turbo or a 911 GT3 RS (I assume). You get a half-day course at Porsche's Experience Centre at Silverstone thrown into the deal – a chance to feel, on a billiard table-smooth race circuit, how the different modes of the car's standard air suspension stiffen things up when you want to press on. It handles about as well as you can expect a 2.1-tonne car to handle, although the outright performance never quite feels like it's matching the claimed 0-62mph time of 5.5sec. It's brisk, not rapid.

Where the Panamera comes into its own is on motorways. That excellent

We appreciated the deftness with which the system cuts the petrol engine in and out

body control keeps things supremely composed at higher speeds, and the beautifully finished cabin does the rest. With the long bonnet stretching out in front of you, it's embarrassingly easy to cross continents – helped by a huge fuel tank that means you only have to start thinking about looking for a filling stations every 550 miles or so.

Here's the surprise, though: while the chassis did all of the basics well, the hybrid powertrain itself was equally impressive. Sure, another 50 miles of pure EV range would be welcome. But once staffers accepted that they weren't going to thump down 30 miles of motorway in silence, they quickly learned to appreciate the deftness with which the system cuts the petrol engine in and out. At 50mph, you'll need to look at the needle to tell it's happening,

such is the smoothness of the whole operation. Only excessive road roar lets the side down on refinement. If I were to spec my own hybrid, I'd keep it on the sensible standard 19in alloys instead of our car's 20s.

It won't surprise you to learn that, sure enough, we didn't get close to the official economy figure. Indeed, the shortfall – 34mpg compared with the official average of more than 90mpg – could well be the largest yet recorded in the Autocar long-termers section.

But I think our average was skewed by a couple of leadfoots who took the car on long journeys to France and Germany. My own experience was that with prodigious charging at either end, a 30-mile commute containing 20 miles of motorway and urban crawls at either end could be achieved with 50mpg or

more. I couldn't help being grudgingly impressed by that.

Indeed, that's probably my overall impression of the Panamera S E-Hybrid. In lots of ways – outright performance, mainly – it doesn't do quite enough to feel like a true Porsche. However, it makes up for this in other areas, such as a luxurious cabin that's beautifully built (there wasn't even the hint of a creak at 10,000 miles) and technology that delivers refinement in the real world.

Is it a tax-break car, then? You bet it is. But if I were in the position where I could take advantage of this loophole and end up with one of these in my company car park space, I'd give it serious consideration. HM Revenue & Customs isn't exactly known for its generosity. It'd be impolite to refuse. john.mcilroy@haymarket.com

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Vauxhall Corsa VXR

Mileage | 5145 A harsh winter wouldn't bode well for our misty-windowed pocket rocket

When the new Corsa came out at the start of the year, plenty of noise was made about a new heated windscreen being offered. It's what the customers asked for, apparently, after complaints that the old Corsa was too slow to demist.

I mention this because it's a clear illustration that, for the most part, the new Corsa is an updated version of the old car. There was certainly no chance to change something as complex as the heating system's plumbing.

So that means you still only have to sing along to a song on the radio and the whole front cabin steams up before you even get to the chorus. It's not that the car is too slow to demist; it's that it steams up so much in the first place.

It's a good thing, then, that the heated windscreen does its job. So when



The windows mist up at the slightest provocation, but a heated windscreen helps



The engine is more than potent enough

the screens are clear and you can get on with driving the Corsa VXR, what's it like? Well, it's much like the old one.

I only had a paragraph first time out for some initial driving impressions and noted that the ride, on standard suspension, was more supple than I was expecting, having heard about the firmness of Corsa VXRs fitted with the optional Performance Pack.

Having now spent more time in the VXR, I think I need to qualify that statement: the suppleness becomes more evident the faster you go. In town the car crashes around, but find a fast B-road and it feels more compliant and involving. Body control is impressive at higher speeds, too.

The powertrain is also be a mixed bag. On damp autumn roads, the Corsa VXR can be spinning its wheels even in third gear as it tries to get the power down. It's a strangely endearing trait – and hardly surprising with more than 200bhp going through the front wheels – but not at all sophisticated. In the dry, the VXR is as quick a hot hatch as you're ever likely to need, with a power delivery that's linear and approachable. On the right road and in the right conditions, the Corsa VXR can be a real hoot. Fingers crossed for a mild winter.

mark.tishaw@haymarket.com

Vauxhall Corsa VXR

Price £17,995 **Price as tested** £19,190

Economy 34.2mpg **Faults** None

Expenses None **Last seen** 21.10.15



Suzuki Celerio

Mileage 5214

"What. Is. That?" Mrs Holder's tone of voice was not welcoming. With a month to go until her own new car (a Renault Zoe) arrives, I had put her 07-plate Ford C-Max up for sale. With the marks of a well-used kid carrier and finished in the sort of light metallic blue no one

has ever dreamed of owning, I was pleasantly shocked to sell it within 24 hours – if not so pleasantly surprised to find the buyer has tutored herself in 'how to haggle' advice from our sister brand What Car? How could I argue?

Anyway, with an interim car now required, I borrowed the Celerio and

took it home. It's so charming, sprightly and spacious that you can't help but fall in love with it, but doing so requires some time behind the wheel. As the indignant face before me reaffirmed, and with apologies to the design teams back in Japan, it isn't a car that you look at and immediately want.

Fast forward 24 hours, however, and, my, how her tune had changed. And that, I think, sums up the Celerio experience. Was I smug? A little. But the fact is, this is not only a worthy car but also an extremely capable one that, on pure objective assessment, is within a whisker of the very best – and perhaps ahead if your budget is set low. Standouts include the peppy engine, which returns a remarkable 60mpg-plus, and the interior space, which is a fraction bigger than that in the VW Up.

In particular, it's a deeply impressive town performer, even for a mum with two kids and masses of stuff to lug about. It's just about big enough for all that, while still being small enough to fit into every gap you want to squeeze

through. It keeps up with stop-start traffic in a reasonably refined way and its light steering, while short on feel, makes manoeuvring into the tightest spaces pretty simple.

It's a hard slog converting people to the Suzuki's charms one by one, but on this evidence it certainly deserves a bigger audience.

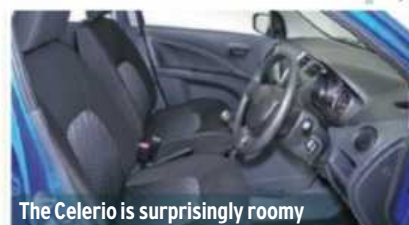
jim.holder@haymarket.com

Suzuki Celerio SZ3 Dualjet

Price £8499 **Price as tested** £8929

Economy 61.9mpg **Faults** New fuel computer, sporadic misfire

Expenses None **Last seen** 28.10.15



The Celerio is surprisingly roomy

feefo

The Global Feedback Engine

★★★★★
Service Rating

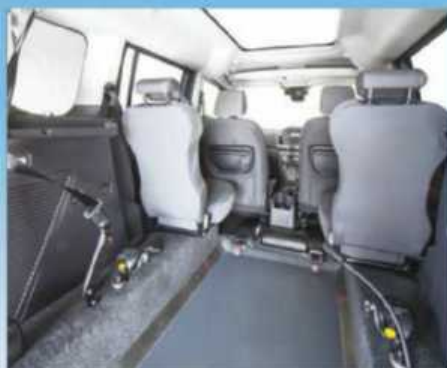
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THE LOG BOOK

**Range Rover Sport****Mileage 23,897 Last seen 20.9.15**

I've had a few tests in large SUVs recently, and I'm struck by how much better visibility is in the Range Rover Sport. The squared-off edges, high seating position and large glass area give the driver an intuitive sense of the car's size that rivals struggle to match. That's an invaluable advantage when squeezing down a tight street between parked cars. JH

**BMW M4****Mileage 10,898 Last seen 28.10.15**

After a rubber-smoking photo shoot, I knew the M4's rear tyres were marginal and wanted to send them off in style before replacing them (at a cost of £683.18). But then the autumnal rains came, the roads started getting the sketchy side of 'exciting' and I had to swap the tyres over before that opportunity came. Looking at what I removed, it wasn't a moment too soon. DT

**Ford Mondeo****Mileage 10,522 Last seen 4.11.15**

After spending time in a number of other cars while mine was having its dented doors replaced, I've realised that the Mondeo's infotainment system can be a bit long-winded at times, especially when using the sat-nav. It requires a lot of screen poking to get your route dialled in, and I've used others that are more streamlined and intuitive. LL

Lexus NX300h

Mileage | 8895 Potential rivals are failing to lure the NX's keeper away from his Lexus

We get to try a lot of different cars in this trade of temptations, which makes returning to one's own long-term test car sometimes a difficult business.

However, recent drives in some new SUVs that might be seen as potential rivals to our Lexus NX – such as the BMW X1, Hyundai Tucson and Volvo XC90 – have done nothing to convince me that I like any of them any more than our car, however impressive one or two of them are in one or two areas. The Volvo, in particular, is noticeably better to drive than the car it replaces, but it does feel unnecessarily large, unlike the Lexus, which, despite its spacious interior, never feels intimidating to drive.

Our car is ageing well, too, with no signs of wear after nearly 9000 miles, whereas a drive in our long-term Range Rover Sport came as a bit of a shock. It had seemed quite likeable as a driving tool on first acquaintance, but its leaden steering made me wonder about the state of its tyres and their pressures, and that transmission lag is still so bad that you could drive a horse and coaches through it.

This talk of transmissions means, I'm afraid, I'm going to bang on again about



Pearsons now have two cars with continuously variable transmission: Jazz and NX

the NX's eCVT hybrid drive system, because, along with the car's stiff ride, it's an area that attracts criticism. I know I should be concentrating instead on its brilliant front seats, or its useful 360deg rear-view camera and lashings of safety equipment, not to mention its neat sound system, exquisite build quality and capacious boot. I know, too, that I've mentioned the transmission before, and everyone must by now be aware of what this clever system does, if not exactly how it does it.

But, you see, my wife recently acquired a 2003 Honda Jazz with a CVT gearbox, and I can't help but compare it with the Lexus. The two cars are obviously a world away in their aims – the Jazz is a modest urban runabout and the NX a BMW-busting, leathered-up premium player – but what has surprised me is how much more sprightly the old Honda feels away from a standstill, and how

its transmission makes less fuss than the Lexus's. Floor the throttle and the ancient Jazz can beat almost anything in an urban sprint up to, say, 30mph, whereas the NX has to lift up its considerable skirts before its engine positively roars into life. (There is, in these situations, no chance of accelerating on electric power alone.)

Hondas of all types are two a penny in my part of Surrey, supported by some strong local dealerships, but I'm now seeing a growing number of NXs, too, and I can see why it's popular. It looks especially striking in white or electric blue. People comment favourably to me on its looks, and its associations with the fashionista Will.i.am are probably enough on their own to make it a good proposition for many, however many tempting rivals it actually has.

mark.pearson@haymarket.com

Lexus NX300h Premier**Price £42,995 Price as tested £44,640****Economy 32.9mpg Faults None****Expenses None Last seen 28.10.15**

With eCVT, the NX can feel sluggish away from rest

DEALS

**Bargain new
and used motors**



A service you might click with

A new UK company is offering a hassle-free way to buy and sell cars online. **James Rupert** explains all

It's funny being a dinosaur, especially a motor industry one. The more that things are done differently – or digitally, it seems – the more they stay exactly the same. I was intrigued to read that a company was offering used cars “delivered to the door” with 150 checks performed and a 14-day money-back guarantee.

Although the service is being launched about now, it has been around since the spring. Oh, and the company is called Carspring, although I didn't ask why. Not that it ever matters these days. Witness eBay and Amazon.

Carspring's founder, Max Vollenbroich, says: “Today, e-commerce is king, but the second-hand car market has struggled to evolve with the digital

age in the way we've seen happen in most other sectors.” I met Max and he is a jolly nice chap.

On the face of it, what they're doing is very traditional. They will buy cars from people like you and then check them over and sell them back to people like you. What they aim to cut out is the annoying bit: the car showroom. So all you have to do is click on the car you like the look of, pay and then a few days later someone drives or trailers it to your door. If you don't like it, there is a 14-day money-back guarantee.

To quote their press material directly: “The company says it wants people to think of it as their ‘car concierge’ service that can steer them through the plethora of models on offer, wade



Rupert can see potential in Carspring

through the jargon and cut through the confusion of pricing and hidden costs.”

The concierge approach always works for the time-poor, cash-rich among us, but it could be problematic when there is a £1500 starting point. Max told me they check the car thoroughly and the AA is going to be involved soon, so that's all very reassuring. Under the latest consumer legislation, that's the least it should be, and surely there

You click on the car you want, pay and then someone drives it to your door. There's a 14-day money-back guarantee



P72 James Rupert
Used car expert



P74 Mark Pearson
Deals expert



P76 Nic Cackett
Data expert



Carspring buys from the public, inspects the cars and sells on

BANGERNOMICS BEST BUYS



READER'S CAR: JAGUAR XJ8

Dr Lee Jones bought this 76,000-mile, 1998 Jaguar XJ8 18 months ago for £600. There was a catch, though. "It had stiff steering," Lee says. "A service involving a new power steering pump, new steering rack and a few other bits was done for about £900.

"It has fancy gold alloy wheels and cream leather. There have been no MOT test advisories. The only expenditures have been tyres and services. It has provided faultless, classy motoring since. A keeper."

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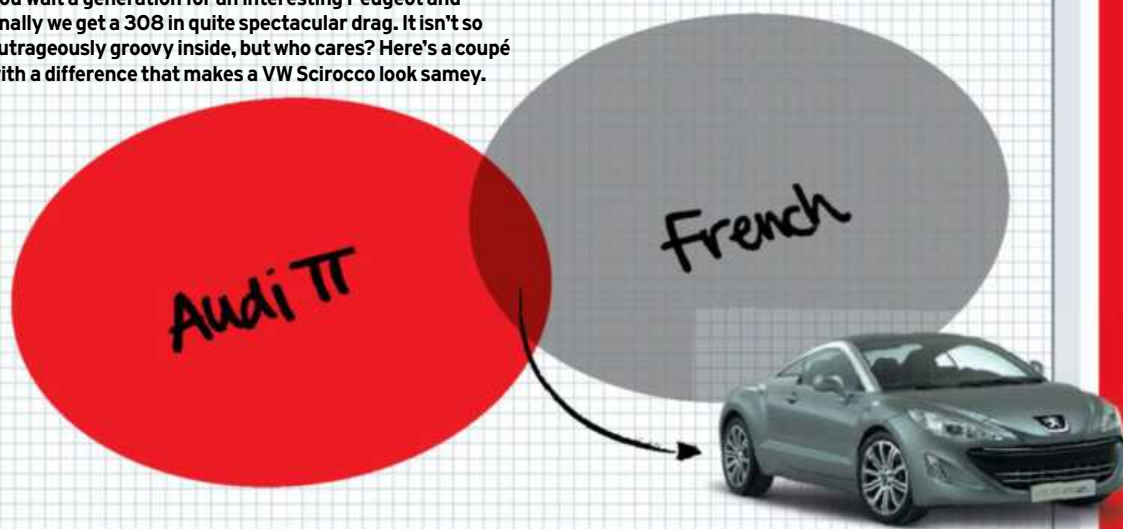
WHAT CAUGHT MY EYE THIS WEEK: ESTATES

Used estate cars have been losing their retail lustre, which means they often make great-value buys at the bottom, middle or near the top of the market.



USED CAR DILEMMA: PEUGEOT RCZ

You wait a generation for an interesting Peugeot and finally we get a 308 in quite spectacular drag. It isn't so outrageously groovy inside, but who cares? Here's a coupé with a difference that makes a VW Scirocco look samey.



are distance-selling regulations to be considered as well. At the moment there aren't many cars to look at: 60 a few months back and around 90 now.

Carspring might be on to a winner by selling your car. They agree a fixed fee. Then they send a mechanic to inspect the car and take care of the entire sales process, without the need for buyers turning up on your doorstep. What's more, the company will buy the car if it doesn't sell on the website within 30 days. Of course, it all depends on how much the car is being sold for.

Sounds rather a good deal, but terms and conditions obviously apply. This needs to be scaled up rapidly to work or just be a niche service. Depends how long the money lasts, I suppose.

Three is the magic number

Whether you want a three-seater or a vehicle with three wheels, **Mark Pearson** has some enticing suggestions, priced from £3k to £6m



1 McLaren F1 (1992-1998)

When we first tried this three-seat supercar, we called it the finest driving machine yet built for the public road, and many think it still is.

Ex-Formula 1 designer Gordon Murray created this 240mph, low-weight, high-tech rocketship. The driver sits in the middle, because that's the best place to be, and the two passengers sit either side.

Power comes from a mid-mounted 617bhp 6.1-litre BMW V12 that shoots the F1 from zero to 100mph in just 6.3sec. It goes, it stops, it corners, and it does it all faster than just about anything else.

The F1 cost £540,000 new. Today you'll need at least £6 million, but, shared between three people, that might not be so bad.

2



Matra Murena (1980-1983)

What the delightfully wide and deliciously low three-seat Murena lacked in speed it made up for in sensual gratification.

It replaced the equally fruity Bagheera and retained that car's three-in-a-row seating layout, with the driver on the left of the passengers (or on the right, in a few cases) in a stylish, if cosy, interior.

The higher-powered of the two

engine options was a 118bhp 2.2-litre mid-mounted four, which pushes the Murena from 0-60mph in 8.8sec and on to 122mph. Cornering is impressive, with little pitch or roll. It even rides well.

Only 10,000 examples were made, but if you're happy with left-hand drive, there are plenty available on the Continent, priced from around £4k.

Morgan 3 Wheeler (2012-present)

A tricycle with two wheels at the front and one at the rear is an infinitely more stable affair than one with the layout reversed. Keep the centre of mass low and it can also be remarkably civilised.

Morgan showed how this could be done as far back as 1912. Its three-wheelers subsequently inspired many more modern interpretations and

prompted the Malvern firm to bring out a new version of its own in 2012.

Powered by an 80bhp 2.0-litre V-twin, this 3 Wheeler is a faster and more chunky affair than the original but retains its low-flying, chocks-away spirit. It dispatches 0-62mph in 8.0sec and attacks corners with aplomb.

A good second-hand one will be £25k.

3





FOR MORE
USED CAR
ADVICE VISIT
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4



Piaggio MP3 (2006-present)

Encounter so much as a wet leaf mid-bend on your motorbike and you will be sliding down the road on your leather-clad rump. Trikes that have two wheels at the rear don't have this problem, but they can't thread through traffic like an ordinary motorcycle can.

Enter the Piaggio M3. With two tilting front wheels, it dispenses with the

dynamic disadvantage of the dicyclic vehicle while preserving the agility of the monotrack. The latest 500cc model comes with a CVT and a 5.0sec 0-62mph time. Top speed is 90mph. It handles well, and even hardened motorcyclists admire them. Classed as a tricycle, it can be ridden with a standard car licence.

Buy second-hand from around £3k.

Bond Bug (1970-1974)

Early Bond Minicars were low and light two-stroke affairs, but the 1970s Bug was a much more fashionable thing.

Ogle Design's Tom Karen, who also did the Reliant Scimitar, penned the Bond Bug's sharply styled body. Driver and passenger enter via the pull-forward canopy.

Underneath, a 29bhp (31bhp if you can find the ES model) 700cc Reliant

in-line four propels the lightweight Bug to 78mph. Steering is two-turns-lock-to-lock quick and the turning circle just 24ft. However, with its single front wheel, it's only really stable when driven in reverse. It's a hairy experience – slightly uncivilised but definitely involving.

For the full tangerine dream, put your flares on and go and buy one now for between £4k and £8k. Groovy, baby!

5



NEW CARS A-Z

For full reviews of every car listed here, visit our website, autocar.co.uk

Autocar's star ratings explained

- ☆☆☆☆☆ Inherently dangerous/unsafe. Tragically, irredeemably flawed.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Appalling. Massively significant failings.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Very poor. Fails to meet any accepted class boundaries.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Poor. Within acceptable class boundaries in a few areas. Still not recommendable.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Off the pace. Below average in nearly all areas.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Acceptable. About average in key areas, but disappoints.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Competent. Above average in some areas, average in others. Outstanding in none.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Good. Competitive in key areas.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Very good. Very competitive in key areas, competitive in secondary respects.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Excellent. Near class leading in key areas, and in some ways outstanding.
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Brilliant, unsurpassed. All but flawless.

Full road test on autocar.co.uk

Any car that has had a full Autocar road test is highlighted in yellow.

FOR FULL RESULTS see page 91

Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
ABARTH				
500 3dr hatch Good value hot hatch. In essence fun it's great fun to drive				
1.4 T-Jet	£14,295	133	155	26
500 CONVERTIBLE 2dr open Open top hot hatch, has a softer ride than the top car				
1.4 16v Turbo T-Jet	£16,995	133	155	27
ALFA ROMEO				
MITO 3dr hatch Classy, well equipped and cheap. No dynamic benchmark				
0.9 TB Twinkl 105 Distinctive	£16,160	107	98	13
0.9 TB Twinkl 105 0V Line	£16,910	107	98	13
1.4 140 M'air TCT Distinctive	£17,710	138	124	19
1.4 140 M'air TCT 0V Line	£18,460	138	124	20
1.6 JTDm 105 Distinctive	£16,345	94	90	11
1.6 JTDm 120 0V Line S	£17,910	118	114	19
1.6 JTDm 120 0V Line	£18,660	118	114	20
GIULIETTA 3dr hatch Stylish, rewarding family hatch. A new era for Alfa				
2.0 JTDm 175 Excl. TCT	£22,840	148	110	20
2.0 JTDm 175 0V Line TCT	£22,840	148	110	20
1.4 TB 120 Progression	£18,450	118	149	16
1.4 TB 120 Distinctive	£19,700	118	149	16
1.4 TB Multir 170 Distinctive	£21,200	168	134	23
1.4 TB Multir 170 Excl.	£22,950	168	134	23
1.4 TB Multir 170 Excl. TCT	£24,245	168	134	23
1.4 TB Multir 170 0V Line	£24,700	168	134	23
1.4 TB Multir 170 0V Line TCT	£25,995	168	134	23
1.6 JTDm 105 Progression	£19,500	107	114	16
1.6 JTDm 105 Distinctive	£20,750	107	114	16
1.6 JTDm 105 Excl.	£22,500	107	114	16
2.0 JTDm 150 Distinctive	£22,950	148	110	20
2.0 JTDm 150 Excl.	£23,680	148	110	20
2.0 JTDm 150 0V Line	£25,430	148	110	20
4C 2dr coupé A singular statement. Flawed, perhaps, but the best current Alfa by miles				
1.75T	£51,500	237	159	50
ALPINA				
B3 2dr coupé Rapid, usable and cheaper alternative to an M3				
3.0 S Biturbo	£51,350	304	224	-
B4 4dr saloon Rapid, usable and cheaper alternative to an M3				
3.0 S Biturbo	£50,750	304	224	-
B5 CONVERTIBLE 2dr open Rapid, usable, cheaper alternative to an M3				
3.0 S Biturbo	£54,450	304	225	-
B5 TOURING 5dr estate Rapid, usable and cheaper alternative to an M3				
3.0 S Biturbo	£51,350	304	225	-
B5 4dr saloon Huge pace, but let down by unimpressive dynamics				
85 Biturbo	£71,950	507	252	-
B5 TOURING 5dr estate Huge pace, but let down by unimpressive dynamics				
85 Biturbo	£71,950	507	255	-
B7 4dr saloon Makes sense on an autobahn but not for the UK				
4.4 V8 Switch-tronic	£99,850	500	282	-
4.4 V8 Switch-tronic LWB	£99,850	500	282	-
D3 4dr saloon Precise dynamics with added Alpina lures, and a great engine				
3.0 Biturbo	£46,950	345	139	50
D5 4dr saloon Rapid, usable and cheaper alternative to an M5				
3.0 Bi-Turbo	£59,950	340	155	-
XD3 5dr 4x4 Alpina's first SUV is a triumph. Hugely fast, capable and desirable				
3.0 XD3	£54,950	345	49	-
ARIEL				
ATON 0dr open Superbly fast track machine. As exhilarating as cars get				
245	£29,212	245	-	-
300	£34,319	300	-	-
ASTON MARTIN				
RAPIDE 4dr saloon Four door Aston is more practical, but just as charming				
5.9 V12 S	£149,995	550	355	-
VANTAGE 2dr coupé Stunning Brit sports car. V12 is a new benchmark for Aston				
4.7 V8	£84,995	420	299	-
4.7 V8 S	£99,995	430	299	-
5.9 V12 S	£138,000	565	388	50
VANTAGE ROADSTER 2dr open Drop-top suits the Vantage's relaxed nature				
4.7 V8	£98,995	420	299	-
BMW				
1 Series				
116i				
1.6 T	£11,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S	£12,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport	£13,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£14,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£15,995	116	116	17
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1.6 T S Sport Step	£160,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£161,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£162,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£163,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£164,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£165,995	116	116	17
1.6 T S Sport Step	£166,995	116	116	

AUTOCAR TOP FIVES

Sport coupés



1 Porsche Cayman From £40,000

Starter Cayman is as good as it gets. Scalpel-blade incisiveness folded into supreme usability. Prettier now, too. ★★★★★



2 Toyota GT86 From £25,000

Who knew Toyota had another masterpiece in it after the Lexus LFA? Fun doesn't cover it. A life companion. ★★★★★



3 BMW M235i From £34,000

Towers over most obvious rivals. Only by comparing it with BMW's best ever do the marginal demerits appear. ★★★★★



4 Audi TT S From £38,000

Costliest version gets the deffest chassis ever to underpin a TT – the best reason yet to buy into Audi's coupé. ★★★★★



5 Peugeot RCZ R From £32,000

The hot RCZ finally delivers the vivid driving experience its appearance always deserved. A serious prospect. ★★★★★

Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
4.2 V8 RS5	£69,555	444	249	47
2.0 TDI 177 SE	£34,575	175	127	29
2.0 TDI 177 S line	£37,825	175	127	30
2.0 TDI 204 S	£41,555	201	138	33
2.0 TDI 245 quattro S line	£45,220	242	147	39
A6 Mirasol The best spring A61 saloon, and one of the most appealing full stop. ★★★★★				
2.0 TDI 180 quattro SE	£31,165	176	144	44
3.0 TDI 220 quattro S line	£48,990	216	159	43
3.0 TDI 218 Black Edition	£43,135	215	127	35
3.0 TDI 218 quattro Black Edn	£44,895	215	138	40
3.0 TDI 218 quattro S line	£42,720	215	133	39
3.0 TDI 218 quattro SE	£40,195	215	133	39
3.0 TDI 272 quattro Black Edn	£46,455	268	138	42
4.0 TFSI 450 SE	£56,545	429	214	42
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra SE	£32,295	187	113	32
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra S line	£34,020	187	114	33
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra Black Edn	£33,995	187	113	33
3.0 TDI 218 SE	£38,435	215	122	34
3.0 TDI 218 S line	£40,660	215	122	34
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£41,755	268	133	41
3.0 TDI 272 quattro S line	£42,880	268	133	42
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£44,645	268	133	43
A6 AVANT Sdr estate A capable stress buster, with a quiet killer. ★★★★★				
3.0 TDI 220 quattro Black Edn	£53,330	316	169	44
3.0 TDI 220 quattro S line	£51,040	316	164	43
3.0 TDI 218 Black Edition	£45,185	215	127	35
3.0 TDI 218 quattro Black Edn	£46,960	215	144	40
3.0 TDI 218 quattro S line	£44,770	215	138	39
3.0 TDI 218 quattro SE	£42,245	215	138	39
3.0 TDI 272 quattro Black Edn	£48,820	268	144	42
4.0 TFSI 560 RS6	£87,790	522	223	50
4.0 TFSI 450 SE	£58,455	429	217	47
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra SE	£33,445	187	113	32
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra S line	£35,670	187	113	33
2.0 TDI 190 Ultra Black Edn	£35,645	187	113	33
3.0 TDI 218 SE £40,665, 215, 125, 34				
3.0 TDI 218 S line	£43,910	215	125	35
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£43,805	268	138	41
3.0 TDI 272 quattro S line	£46,330	268	138	42
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£48,515	268	138	43
A6 ALLROAD Sdr estate Koppel d'ad. Even more poise. ★★★★★				
3.0 TDI 218 quattro	£45,755	215	149	39
3.0 TDI 218 quattro Sport	£49,455	215	149	39
3.0 TDI 272 quattro	£47,315	268	149	42
3.0 TDI 272 quattro Sport	£51,015	268	149	42
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£52,125	268	149	43
3.0 TDI 272 quattro Sport	£58,825	316	172	43
A7 SPORTBACK Sdr hatch A good mix of luxury, practicality and drives reward. ★★★★★				
2.0 TFSI 333 quattro S line	£53,045	328	182	44
2.0 TFSI 333 quattro Black Edn	£53,395	328	182	44
3.0 TDI 218 Ultra SE Exec	£45,915	215	124	37
3.0 TDI 218 Ultra S line	£48,795	215	128	38
3.0 TDI 218 quattro SE Exec	£47,670	215	138	41
3.0 TDI 218 quattro S line	£45,480	215	142	41
3.0 TDI 218 quattro Black Edn	£52,830	215	142	42
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE Exec	£49,555	268	138	43
3.0 TDI 272 quattro S line	£53,060	268	142	43
3.0 TDI 272 quattro Black Edn	£55,410	268	142	44
3.0 TDI 272 quattro SE	£56,730	268	142	45
3.0 TDI 272 quattro S line	£59,080	316	167	45
A8 Mirasol Stylish, comfortable and solid. A convincing exec saloon. ★★★★★				
2.0 TDI 258 quattro SE Exec	£62,185	247	155	46
2.0 TFSI 245 Hybrid	£64,280	200	144	42
2.0 TFSI 245 Hybrid L	£68,285	200	148	43
2.0 TFSI 310 quattro SE Exec	£64,290	309	183	46
2.0 TFSI 310 quattro Sport Exec	£67,890	309	183	46
4.0 TFSI 435 quattro SE Exec L	£161,640	429	216	49
4.0 TFSI 435 quattro Sport Exec	£179,640	429	216	49
4.0 TFSI 520 SE	£80,735	513	216	49
6.3 W12 500 quattro L	£97,920	497	254	50
3.0 TDI 258 quattro SE	£59,580	254	155	46
3.0 TDI 258 quattro SE L	£63,455	254	158	46
4.0 V8 S	£66,150	247	158	46
3.0 TDI 258 quattro SE Exec L	£65,785	254	158	46
3.0 TDI 258 quattro Sport Exec L	£69,750	254	158	47
4.2 TDI 385 quattro SE Exec	£128,35	380	189	50
4.2 TDI 385 quattro SE Ex L	£168,000	346	190	50
4.2 TDI 385 quattro Sport Exec	£163,900	380	194	50
4.2 TDI 385 quattro Sport Ex L	£180,350	380	197	50
Q3 Sdr 4x4 Typically refined and competent, but feels more A3 than SUV. ★★★★★				
1.4 TFSI 150 SE	£25,380	138	128	19
1.4 TFSI 150 S line	£28,060	138	121	20
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro SE	£29,640	176	152	27
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro S line	£32,190	176	155	27
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro S II Plus	£34,540	176	161	28
2.5 TFSI 340 quattro RS	£45,540	335	207	37
2.0 TDI 150 SE	£22,620	148	119	20
2.0 TDI 150 quattro SE	£28,480	148	131	20
2.0 TDI 150 S line	£29,470	148	122	21
2.0 TDI 150 quattro S line	£31,930	148	134	21
2.0 TDI 150 quattro S II Plus	£33,380	148	140	21
2.0 TDI 184 quattro SE	£29,280	181	139	24
2.0 TDI 184 quattro S line	£31,845	181	143	24
2.0 TDI 184 quattro S II Plus	£34,195	181	148	25
Q5 Sdr 4x4 Exceptionally good handling for an SUV, but very compromised ride. ★★★★★				
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro S line PI	£36,270	178	174	29
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro SE	£31,370	178	174	28
2.0 TFSI 180 quattro S line	£33,770	178	174	29
2.0 TFSI 225 quattro SE	£32,845	222	173	29
2.0 TFSI 225 quattro S line	£35,300	222	179	29
2.0 TFSI 225 q'tro S line Plus	£37,800	222	181	30
2.0 TDI 150 quattro SE	£31,720	148	147	21
2.0 TDI 150 quattro S line	£34,120	148	150	21
2.0 TDI 150 quattro S line Plus	£36,655	148	152	22
2.0 TDI 177 quattro S line	£35,610	175	154	25
2.0 TDI 177 q'tro S line Plus	£37,510	175	154	25
2.0 TDI 245 quattro SE	£38,870	241	169	33
2.0 TDI 245 q'tro S line Plus	£40,770	241	169	34
3.0 TDI 245 q'tro S line Plus	£44,370	241	169	34
3.0 TDI 312 S05	£44,785	309	174	41
Q7 Sdr 4x4 Seven-seat SUV feels like a BMW X5 at the wheel. ★★★★★				
3.0 TDI 204 S line Plus	£51,155	201	189	37
3.0 TDI 245 S line Plus	£52,585	237	195	41
3.0 TDI 245 S line Sport Edn	£55,585	237	195	41
3.0 TDI 245 S line Style Edn	£54,085	237	195	41
4.2 TDI 340 S line Plus	£62,220	335	242	46
4.2 TDI 340 S line Sport Edn	£65,220	335	242	47
4.2 TDI 340 S line Style Edn	£63,720	335	242	47
3.0 TDI 204 SE	£43,895	201	189	35
3.0 TDI 204 S line	£46,655	237	189	36
3.0 TDI 245 S line	£48,085	237	195	40
4.2 TDI 340 S line	£57,720	335	242	45
TT 2dr coupé TT finds its wings at last. Drive experience now as equal to the obvious prestige. ★★★★★				
2.0 TFSI Sport	£29,915	228	141	35
2.0 TFSI Sport quattro	£32,860	228	153	37
2.0 TFSI S line	£32,465	228	141	35
2.0 TFSI S line quattro	£35,410	228	153	38
2.0 TFSI 210 quattro TTS	£38,945	206	168	45
2.0 TDI Ultra Sport	£29,810	181	116	34
2.0 TDI Ultra S line	£32,360	181	116	35
TT ROADSTER 2dr open Takes the edge off the TTS line looks – but still hugely competent. ★★★★★				
2.0 TDI ultra 184 S line	£34,545	181	114	36
2.0 TDI ultra 184 Sport	£37,195	181	114	35
2.0 TFSI 230 quattro S line	£37,595	228	158	39
2.0 TFSI 230 quattro SE	£35,045	228	158	38
2.0 TFSI 230 S line	£34,650	228	144	38
2.0 TFSI 230 Sport	£32,100	228	144	37
2.0 TFSI 230 TTS	£41,130	206	173	43
R8 2dr coupé Usable, but no less involving and dramatic. V10 is brutal. ★★★★★				
4.2 TFSI 430 V8	£97,305	424	332	50
5.2 TFSI 525 V10	£114,085	510	346	50
5.2 TFSI 550 V10 Plus	£126,885	543	346	50
R8 SPYDER 2dr open Great noise, and loses little of the coupé's poise. ★★★★★				
4.2 TFSI 430 V8	£102,475	424	337	50
5.2 TFSI 525 V10	£123,335	510	349	50
BAC				
MONO 2dr open An F-22 fighter for the road. Only better built. ★★★★★				
2.0	£111,140	280	-	-
BENTLEY				
CONTINENTAL GT 2dr coupé A brilliant Audi V8 inspired reborn. ★★★★★				
6.0 W12 GT Speed	£151,100	616	338	50
4.0 V8	£123,850	500	246	50
4.0 V8 S	£139,000	521	246	50
6.0 W12	£136,710	567	385	50
CONTINENTAL GT CONVERTIBLE 2dr open A brilliant Audi V8 inspired reborn. ★★★★★				
4.0 V8	£136,250	500	254	50
4.0 V8 S	£152,900	521	254	50
6.0 W12 Speed	£167,900	616	347	50
MULSAPNE Mirasol Effortless and graceful. Great driving position. ★★★★★				
6.75 V10	£224,100	506	392	-
FLYING SPUR 4dr saloon A genuine luxury saloon. Superb inside. As it should be. ★★★★★				
4.0 V8	£136,000	500	254	50
6.0 W12	£140,900	616	343	50
6.0 W12 Mulliner	£150,220	616	343	50
BMW				
1 SERIES 3dr hatch Measures up on space and comfort now. Still no 3 Series. ★★★★★				
118i SE	£20,245	134	125	18
118i Sport	£21,245	134	129	18
118i M Sport	£23,075	168	133	19
120i Sport	£23,295	134	136	21
120i M Sport	£24,995	134	139	22
125i M Sport	£26,375	215	157	28
116i SE	£21,260	115	188	37
116i ED Plus	£21,180	114	94	15
116i M Sport	£22,030	114	89	15
116i M Sport	£22,180	114	103	15
116i M Sport	£22,800	114	106	16
118d SE	£22,325	148	109	19
118d M Sport	£22,325	148	109	19
118d M Sport	£25,025	148	114	20
118d M Sport	£24,775	187	114	24
120d M Sport	£26,475	187	118	25
125d M Sport	£29,000	221	121	30
1 SERIES 5dr hatch Measures up on space and comfort now. Still no 3 Series. ★★★★★				
118i SE	£20,775	168	125	18
118i Sport	£21,775	168	129	18
118i M Sport	£23,605	168	133	19
120i Sport	£23,825	134	136	21
120i M Sport	£25,625	134	139	22
125i M Sport	£26,905	215	157	28
116i SE	£21,770	114	94	15
116i ED Plus	£22,560	114	89	15
116i M Sport	£22,710	114	103	15

NEW CARS A-Z

Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
320i M Sport	£30905	181	153	31
328i Luxury	£34305	242	162	36
328i M Sport	£34105	242	162	36
316d ES	£27155	114	116	20
316d SE	£28425	114	116	20
316d Sport	£28725	114	116	20
318d SE	£29675	141	124	24
318d Sport	£29975	141	124	24
318d Luxury	£32175	141	127	25
318d M Sport	£31975	141	127	25
320d SE	£30775	181	125	31
320d Luxury	£33275	181	128	32
320d M Sport	£33075	181	128	32
320d xDrive Sport	£32705	181	133	30
320d xDrive Luxury	£34905	181	133	31
320d xDrive M Sport	£34705	181	133	31
330d SE	£36105	255	135	38
330d Luxury	£38605	255	138	40
330d M Sport	£38405	255	138	40
330d xDrive Luxury	£40120	255	145	41
330d xDrive M Sport	£39920	255	145	41
3 SERIES GT 5dr hatch Hatchback practicality meets 3-Series talent. Duller but decent ★★★★★				
318d M Sport	£33525	141	122	25
318d SE	£31275	141	122	24
320i M Sport	£32155	181	155	31
320i SE	£29905	181	155	31
320i xDrive Luxury	£33405	181	165	31
320i xDrive M Sport	£33655	181	165	31
320i xDrive SE	£31405	181	165	31
320i xDrive Sport	£32405	181	165	31
328i SE	£33105	242	157	35
320d xDrive M Sport	£41470	258	144	41
320i Sport	£30905	181	155	31
320i Luxury	£31905	181	155	31
328i Sport	£34105	242	157	36
328i Luxury	£35105	242	157	36
328i M Sport	£35355	242	157	36
335i Luxury	£40565	302	189	38
335i M Sport	£40815	302	189	38
318d Sport	£32275	141	122	24
318d Luxury	£33275	141	122	24
320d SE	£32375	181	130	30
320d Sport	£33375	181	130	30
320d Luxury	£34375	181	130	30
320d M Sport	£34625	181	130	30
325d SE	£34305	215	136	34
325d Luxury	£36305	215	136	34
325d M Sport	£36555	215	136	34
330d SE	£37705	258	137	41
330d Luxury	£39705	258	137	41
330d M Sport	£39955	258	137	41
330d xDrive SE	£39220	258	144	40
330d xDrive Luxury	£41220	258	144	40
335d xDrive Luxury	£44120	313	149	42
335d xDrive M Sport	£44370	313	149	42
13 5dr hatch Superb really, but price and not free from the usual electric car practicality issues ★★★★★				
13 EV	£30980	168	0	21
13 EV Range Extender	£41310	168	13	21
4 SERIES 2dr coupé More talented GT than brilliant B-road steer. Very comely though ★★★★★				
430d M Sport	£40945	255	134	40
420i SE	£30125	181	144	30
420i Sport	£31625	181	146	30
420i Luxury	£32625	181	146	30
420i M Sport	£33125	181	146	30
420i xDrive SE	£31660	181	159	30
420i xDrive Sport	£33160	181	163	30
420i xDrive Luxury	£34160	181	163	31
420i xDrive M Sport	£34660	181	163	31
428i SE	£33520	242	154	33
428i Sport	£35020	242	156	33
428i Luxury	£36020	242	156	33
428i M Sport	£41870	302	188	36
435i M Sport	£42370	302	188	36
420d SE	£32495	181	119	29
420d Sport	£33995	181	119	29
420d Luxury	£34995	181	119	29
420d xDrive Sport	£35495	181	125	29
420d xDrive M Sport	£36495	181	125	29
425d SE	£35430	215	131	33
425d Sport	£36930	215	136	34
425d Luxury	£37930	215	136	34
425d M Sport	£38430	215	136	34
430d SE	£40445	255	134	40
430d xDrive Luxury	£41960	255	142	40
5 SERIES TOURING 5dr estate Great overall package. 520d the best ★★★★★				
518d M Sport	£35865	141	127	31
530d Luxury	£46470	241	144	43
535d M Sport	£51120	308	149	45
535i Luxury	£46945	302	179	42
520i SE	£35365	181	157	36
520i M Sport	£38165	181	162	37
528i SE	£38895	242	149	40
528i M Sport	£41730	242	154	41
518d SE	£33065	141	122	30
518d Luxury	£35865	141	127	31
520d SE	£34565	181	122	33
520d M Sport	£37365	181	127	34
525d SE	£37365	181	127	34
525d M Sport	£39310	215	136	39
525d SE	£42125	215	141	40
525d M Sport	£43655	215	141	40
530d SE	£46470	241	144	43
530d M Sport	£51120	308	149	45
5 SERIES GT 5dr hatch Fine cabin, but only seats four. Poor ride and steering ★★★★★				
530d SE	£46965	241	157	43
535i M Sport	£49465	302	192	44
535i SE	£50265	302	192	44
550i M Sport	£59515	402	214	46
550i SE	£60465	402	214	46
520d SE	£38045	181	143	33
520d M Sport	£40845	181	144	34
520d SE	£40845	181	144	34
530d SE	£49665	241	153	44
530d M Sport	£49765	241	153	44
535d M Sport	£51885	259	154	46
535d SE	£52685	259	154	46
7 SERIES 4dr saloon Refined and spacious, but bland. 760i gets sublime V12 ★★★★★				
ActiveHybrid 7 M Sport	£71475	459	158	48
740i SE	£61680	316	184	46
740i SE	£64680	316	184	46
740i M Sport	£66955	316	184	47
750i SE	£71520	443	199	48
750i M Sport	£67695	443	199	49
760i M Sport	£102025	537	314	50
730d SE	£104270	537	314	50
730d SE	£58275	255	148	46
730d SE	£61375	255	148	46
730d M Sport	£63550	255	148	46
730d M Sport	£66650	255	148	46
740d SE	£66465	309	149	47
740d M Sport	£70740	309	149	48
ActiveHybrid 7 SE	£66200	309	148	47
ActiveHybrid 7L SE	£69300	459	158	48
ActiveHybrid 7L M Sport	£74575	459	158	48
X1 5dr 4x4 Odd SUV best as rear-wheel drive. Good drive, poor cabin finish ★★★★★				
xDrive 25d xLine	£32540	215	154	26
xDrive 20i SE	£27285	181	176	28
xDrive 20i Sport	£29285	181	179	28
xDrive 20i xLine	£30285	181	179	28
xDrive 16d SE	£24230	141	128	18
xDrive 18d SE	£25330	141	128	22
xDrive 18d Sport	£26330	141	128	22
xDrive 18d M Sport	£28330	141	128	22
xDrive 18d SE	£26830	141	144	22
xDrive 18d Sport	£27830	141	144	22
xDrive 18d xLine	£28830	141	144	22
xDrive 18d M Sport	£29830	141	144	22
xDrive 20d Efficient Dynamics	£26760	161	119	24
xDrive 20d Eff. Dyn. Business	£28160	181	119	24
xDrive 20d SE	£26760	181	129	24
xDrive 20d Sport	£27760	181	129	25
xDrive 20d M Sport	£29760	181	129	25
xDrive 20d SE	£28260	181	145	25
xDrive 20d Sport	£29260	181	145	25
xDrive 20d xLine	£30260	181	145	25
xDrive 20d M Sport	£31260	181	145	25
xDrive 25d M Sport	£33540	215	154	27
X3 5dr 4x4 New X3 has an appealingly organic drive and practical body ★★★★★				
xDrive 18d SE	£31295	141	131	26
xDrive 20d SE	£33295	181	142	30
xDrive 20d M Sport	£36295	181	142	31
xDrive 20d xLine	£36295	181	142	30
xDrive 30d SE	£40095	255	156	39
xDrive 30d M Sport	£43095	255	156	40
xDrive 30d xLine	£41595	255	156	40
4x4 5dr 4x4 A downsized X6. Respectable enough, but the cheaper X3 is a better option ★★★★★				
xDrive35d M Sport	£45695	308	157	43
xDrive20d SE	£36895	187	142	31
xDrive20d xLine	£38395	187	142	31
xDrive30d M Sport	£38995	187	142	31
xDrive30d xLine	£45195	255	156	40
xDrive35d M Sport	£46695	255	156	40
xDrive35d M Sport	£49295	308	157	43
X5 5dr 4x4 Very comfortable and capable. Although the bling M50d should be avoided ★★★★★				
xDrive50i SE	£60670	402	224	49
xDrive50i M Sport	£64800	402	226	49
xDrive50i M Sport	£90180	567	258	50
xDrive25d SE	£43745	215	149	32
xDrive25d M Sport	£50750	215	156	42
xDrive25d SE	£46050	215	154	42
xDrive30d M Sport	£48950	241	156	44
xDrive30d M Sport	£53550	241	156	45
xDrive40d SE	£51510	302	157	46
xDrive40d M Sport	£56210	302	159	47
xDrive40d M Sport	£64525	381	173	49
M50 5dr 4x4 The world's first off-road coupé, but appearance makes it difficult to love ★★★★★				
xDrive50i SE	£63320	443	225	49
xDrive50i M Sport	£67450	443	227	50
xDrive50i M Sport	£90380	567	258	50
xDrive30d SE	£51400	258	157	45
xDrive30d M Sport	£56100	258	159	45
xDrive40d SE	£54060	313	163	46
xDrive40d M Sport	£58760	313	167	47
xDrive40d SE	£51510	302	157	46
xDrive40d M Sport	£56210	302	159	47
M50d	£64525	381	173	49
X6 5dr 4x4 The world's first off-road coupé, but appearance makes it difficult to love ★★★★★				
xDrive50i SE	£63320	443	225	49
xDrive50i M Sport	£67450	443	227	50
xDrive50i M Sport	£90380	567	258	50
xDrive30d SE	£51400	258	157	45
xDrive30d M Sport	£56100	258	159	45
xDrive40d SE	£54060	313	163	46
xDrive40d M Sport	£58760	313	167	47
xDrive40d SE	£51510	302	157	46
xDrive40d M Sport	£56210	302	159	47
M50d	£64525	381	173	49
24 ROADSTER 2dr open Classy roadster. More cruiser than sports car ★★★★★				
2.0i drive18i	£27740	154	159	33
2.0i drive18i M Sport	£31625	154	159	34
2.0i drive20i	£29840	181	159	34
2.0i drive20i M Sport	£33005	181	159	35
2.0i drive20i M Sport	£37390	242	159	40
3.0i drive35i M Sport	£43010	302	212	49
3.0i drive35i DCT	£45955	352	211	43
6 SERIES GRAN COUPE 4dr saloon Back door proves a brilliant visual coup ★★★★★				
640i SE	£59430	315	178	47

Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
DACIA				
SANDERO 5dr hatch A clever budget prospect. But its limitations are unavoidable. ★★★★★				
0.9 Tce Ambiance	£7595	89 116 6		
0.9 Tce Laureate	£8795	89 116 7		
1.2 Access	£5995	74 135 2		
1.2 Ambiance	£6795	74 135 2		
1.2 Laureate	£7995	74 135 2		
1.5 dCi Ambiance	£8595	89 99 8		
1.5 dCi Laureate	£9795	89 99 10		
SANDERO STEPWAY 5dr hatch More expensive - but still limited. ★★★★★				
0.9 Tce Ambiance	£8395	89 125 -		
0.9 Tce Laureate	£9995	89 125 -		
1.5 dCi Ambiance	£9395	89 105 -		
1.5 dCi Laureate	£10995	89 105 -		
LOGAN MCV 5dr estate Lacks its stablemates charm. Certainly retains the cheap. ★★★★★				
0.9 Ambiance	£8595	89 116 9		
0.9 Laureate	£9795	89 116 11		
1.2 Access	£6995	74 135 4		
1.2 Ambiance	£7795	74 135 4		
1.2 Laureate	£8995	74 135 5		
1.5 dCi Ambiance	£9595	84 99 11		
1.5 dCi Laureate	£10795	84 99 12		
DUSTER 5dr 4x4 Cheap, but cheerfully robust. Surprisingly convincing presence. ★★★★★				
1.6 16v 105 Access 2WD	£9495	103 165 6		
1.6 16v 105 Access 4WD	£11495	103 185 5		
1.5 dCi 110 Ambiance 2WD	£11995	106 130 10		
1.5 dCi 110 Ambiance 4WD	£13995	107 135 10		
1.5 dCi 110 Laureate 2WD	£13495	106 130 11		
1.5 dCi 110 Laureate 4WD	£15495	107 135 10		
FERRARI				
F12 2dr coupé Proper V12 Ferrari with serious exclusivity and appeal. ★★★★★				
6.3 V12	£239,352	730 350 50		
FF 2dr coupé Four-seat Ferrari estate has appeal but lacks classic DNA. ★★★★★				
6.3 V12	£227,077	651 360 50		
CALIFORNIA 2dr open Sleek, comfortable and fast. Now with turbocharger. ★★★★★				
4.3 V8	£152,086	483 270 50		
3.9 V8 T	£154,490	552 250 50		
458 2dr coupé The complete supercar. Calm ride, explosive performance. ★★★★★				
4.5 V8 Italia	£178,461	570 307 50		
4.5 V8 Special	£208,090	597 275 50		
458 SPIDER 2dr open The complete supercar. Minus roof. A world-class head turner. ★★★★★				
4.5 V8	£198,906	570 275 50		
FIAT				
PANDA 5dr hatch Cheap, practical and very nearly spot on. ★★★★★				
0.9 TwinAir 85 4x4 Antartica	£14995	84 105 6		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Trekking	£13075	84 105 6		
1.3 MultiJet 75 4x4 Antartica	£15995	74 125 7		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Easy	£11375	84 99 7		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Lounge	£11875	84 99 7		
0.9 TwinAir 85 4x4	£14575	84 114 7		
1.2 Pop	£9375	68 120 3		
1.2 Easy	£10175	68 120 4		
1.2 Lounge	£10675	68 120 3		
1.3 MultiJet 75 Pop	£11575	74 104 7		
1.3 MultiJet 75 Easy	£12375	74 104 7		
1.3 MultiJet 75 Lounge	£12875	74 104 7		
1.3 MultiJet 75 Trekking	£14075	74 109 7		
1.3 MultiJet 75 4x4	£15575	74 125 7		
500 3dr hatch Super desirable, cute city car. Pleasant, if not involving, to drive. ★★★★★				
0.9 TwinAir 105 60	£15550	103 92 10		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Lounge	£14220	103 92 10		
0.9 TwinAir 105 S	£14370	103 92 10		
0.9 TwinAir 85 60	£15070	84 99 10		
1.2 Colour Therapy	£11220	68 113 9		
1.2 60	£13670	68 113 9		
1.3 MultiJet 60	£16070	94 97 14		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Lounge	£13740	84 92 10		
0.9 TwinAir 85 S	£13890	84 92 10		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Colour Therapy	£12420	84 99 10		
0.9 TwinAir Cult	£14890	84 99 10		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Cult	£15370	103 92 10		
1.2 Pop	£10690	68 113 5		
1.2 Lounge	£12440	68 113 6		
1.2 S	£12590	68 113 9		
1.2 Cult	£13590	68 113 9		
1.4 T-Jet Abarth	£14255	133 155 26		
1.3 MultiJet Lounge	£14840	94 97 15		
1.3 MultiJet S	£14990	94 97 14		
1.3 MultiJet Cult	£15990	94 97 14		
500 CONVERTIBLE 2dr open Super desirable, cute city car. Cab a better drive than hatch. ★★★★★				
0.9 TwinAir 105 60	£18170	103 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Lounge S-S	£16870	103 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 105 S	£17020	84 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Colour Therapy	£14970	84 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 85 60	£17690	84 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 85 S	£16540	84 92 15		
1.2 Colour Therapy	£13770	68 113 10		
1.2 60	£16490	68 113 10		
1.2 S	£15240	68 113 10		
1.3 MultiJet 60	£18890	94 97 18		
1.3 MultiJet S	£17640	94 97 18		
1.4 16v Turbo T-Jet Abarth	£16005	133 155 27		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Lounge S-S	£16390	84 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 85 Cult	£17540	84 92 15		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Cult	£18020	103 92 15		
1.2 Pop S-S	£13690	68 113 9		
1.2 Lounge S-S	£15090	68 113 10		
1.2 Cult	£16240	68 113 10		
1.3 MultiJet Lounge	£17490	94 97 18		
1.3 MultiJet Cult	£18640	94 97 18		
500L 5dr mpv A costly option, but has the style to fill out some of its missing substance. ★★★★★				
1.4 95 Pop	£13390	94 145 10		
0.9 TwinAir Pop Star	£16690	103 112 11		
0.9 TwinAir Lounge	£18090	103 112 11		
0.9 TwinAir Trekking	£18790	103 119 11		
1.4 95 Pop Star	£15550	94 145 10		
1.4 95 Lounge	£16950	94 145 10		
1.4 95 Trekking	£17650	94 149 8		
1.4 120 Pop Star	£17195	118 159 10		
1.4 120 Lounge	£18595	118 159 10		
1.4 120 Trekking	£19295	118 159 10		
1.3 MultiJet 85 Pop Star	£17040	83 110 8		
1.3 MultiJet 85 Lounge	£18440	83 110 9		
1.3 MultiJet 85 Trekking	£19140	83 114 7		
1.6 MultiJet 105 Pop Star	£18040	103 117 17		
1.6 MultiJet 105 Lounge	£19440	103 117 18		
1.6 MultiJet 105 Trekking	£20140	103 122 15		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Pop Star	£18540	118 120 17		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Lounge	£19940	118 120 17		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Trekking	£20640	118 120 17		
500L MPV 5dr mpv As above but with seven-seat flexibility in its more expensive format. ★★★★★				
1.6 MultiJet 120 Lounge Tst	£21380	118 117 17		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Pop Star Tst	£19880	118 117 17		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Pop Star Tst	£17330	103 112 11		
0.9 TwinAir 105 Lounge Tst	£18830	103 112 11		
1.4 95 Pop Star 5st	£15840	94 145 9		
1.4 95 Lounge 5st	£17340	94 145 9		
1.3 MultiJet 85 Pop Star Tst	£18380	83 110 8		
1.3 MultiJet 85 Lounge Tst	£19880	83 110 9		
1.6 MultiJet 105 Pop Star Tst	£19380	103 117 17		
1.6 MultiJet 105 Lounge Tst	£20880	103 117 17		
500X 5dr hatch Familiar styling works rather well as a crossover. Drives okay, too. ★★★★★				
1.4 MultiAir 140 Pop Star	£17595	138 139 -		
1.4 MultiAir 140 Lounge	£19345	138 -		
1.4 MultiAir 140 Cross	£18595	138 -		
1.4 MultiAir 140 Cross Plus	£20345	138 -		
1.3 MultiJet 95 Pop Star	£18095	94 109 -		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Pop Star	£19095	118 -		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Lounge	£20845	118 -		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Cross	£20095	118 -		
1.6 MultiJet 120 Cross Plus	£21845	118 -		
2.0 MultiJet 140 Cross AWD	£24095	118 147 -		
2.0 MultiJet 140 Cross Plus AWD	£25845	118 147 -		
PUNTO 3dr hatch MultiAir tech improves appeal and economy. Still heavily dated though. ★★★★★				
1.2 8v Easy	£11275	68 126 6		
1.2 8v GBT	£11775	68 126 6		
1.2 8v Pop	£10175	68 126 6		
1.3 85 MultiJet Easy	£13775	85 90 13		
1.4 8v Easy	£11685	76 132 8		
1.4 8v GBT	£12185	76 132 8		
1.3 85 MultiJet GBT	£14275	85 90 13		
PUNTO 5dr hatch MultiAir tech improves appeal and economy. Still heavily dated though. ★★★★★				
1.2 8v Easy	£11875	68 126 6		
1.2 8v GBT	£12375	68 126 6		
1.2 8v Pop	£10775	68 126 6		
1.4 8v Easy	£12285	76 132 8		
1.4 8v GBT	£12785	76 132 8		
1.3 85 MultiJet Easy	£14375	85 90 13		
1.3 85 MultiJet GBT	£14875	85 90 13		
FORD				
KA 3dr hatch An agile drive and energetic petrol engine. Wooden ride. ★★★★★				
1.2 Grand Prix III	£11445	68 115 5		
1.2 Studio Connect	£9445	68 115 3		
1.2 Studio	£8995	68 115 3		
1.2 Edge	£9945	68 115 3		
1.2 Zetec	£10695	68 115 3		
1.2 Titanium	£11995	68 115 3		
1.2 Metal	£11445	68 115 5		
B-MAX 5dr mpv Fiesta dynamics and sliding door access make the B-Max a cut above. ★★★★★				
1.0 EcoBoost 100 Zetec	£15495	99 119 9		
1.0 EcoBoost 100 Titanium	£16695	99 119 10		
1.0 EcoBoost 125 Zetec S-S	£16095	118 99 13		
1.0 EcoBoost 125 Titanium X	£17295	118 99 13		
1.0 EcoBoost 125 Titanium X	£18495	118 99 13		
1.4 90 Studio	£13095	89 139 7		
1.4 90 Zetec	£14895	89 139 8		
1.6 105 Zetec Powershift	£16595	103 149 10		
1.6 105 Titanium Powershift	£17795	103 149 11		
1.5 TDCi 75 Zetec	£16295	74 109 8		
1.6 TDCi 95 Zetec	£16795	94 104 10		
1.6 TDCi 95 Titanium	£17995	94 104 11		
FIESTA 3dr hatch Stylish and wonderfully engaging. The best supermini. ★★★★★				
1.6 105 Zetec Powershift	£15045	103 138 12		
1.0 80 Zetec S-S	£13695	79 99 6		
1.0 80 Titanium S-S	£14695	79 99 7		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Zetec S-S	£14195	99 99 11		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Titanium S-S	£15195	99 99 11		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Titanium X S-S	£16445	99 99 11		
1.0 125 EcoBoost Titanium S-S	£15695	123 99 15		
1.0 125 EcoBoost Titanium X S-S	£16945	123 99 16		
1.0 125 EcoBoost Zetec S-S	£15945	123 99 15		
1.25 60 Studio	£10145	59 120 3		
1.6 TDCi 95 Zetec	£18195	59 120 4		
1.25 82 Style	£12395	80 120 7		
1.25 82 Zetec	£13195	80 120 7		
1.6 105 Titanium Powershift	£16045	103 138 12		
1.6 T80 EcoBoost ST	£17545	180 138 30		
1.6 T80 EcoBoost ST2	£18545	180 138 30		
1.6 T80 EcoBoost ST3	£19545	180 138 30		
1.5 TDCi 75 Style	£13995	74 98 8		
1.5 TDCi 75 Zetec	£14795	74 98 9		
1.5 TDCi 75 Titanium	£15795	74 98 9		
1.6 TDCi 95 Style ECOnetic S-S	£14945	94 87 11		
1.6 TDCi 95 Zetec ECOnetic S-S	£15495	94 87 12		
1.6 TDCi 95 Zetec S	£16145	94 95 12		
1.6 TDCi 95 Titanium ECOnetic	£16495	94 87 12		
1.6 TDCi 95 Titanium X	£17295	94 95 13		
FIESTA 5dr hatch Stylish and wonderfully engaging. The best supermini. ★★★★★				
1.25 82 Style	£12995	80 120 7		
1.6 105 Titanium Powershift	£16645	103 138 12		
1.6 105 Zetec Powershift	£15645	103 138 12		
1.0 80 Zetec S-S	£14295	79 99 6		
1.0 80 Titanium S-S	£15295	79 99 7		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Zetec S-S	£14795	99 99 11		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Titanium S-S	£15795	99 99 11		
1.0 100 EcoBoost Titanium X S-S	£17045	99 99 11		
1.0 125 EcoBoost Titanium S-S	£16295	123 99 15		
1.0 125 EcoBoost Titanium X S-S	£17545	123 99 16		
1.25 60 Style	£12495	59 120 4		
1.25 82 Zetec	£13795	80 120 7		
1.5 TDCi 75 Style	£14595	74 98 8		

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3 LaFerrari From £950,000
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4 Bugatti Veyron From £1.15 million
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5 Pagani Huayra From £1.4 million
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Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
GRANTURISMO 2dr coupe Fantastic looks and soundtrack, average chassis ★★★★★	£82280	400	330	50
4.2 V8	£90810	453	331	50
4.7 V8 MC Stradale	£110135	453	360	50
GRANCABRIO 2dr open Fantastic looks and soundtrack, average chassis ★★★★★	£98340	433	337	50
4.7 V8	£103935	453	337	50
4.7 V8 Sport				

MAZDA

2.5dr hatch Much more grown-up now. Handsome and comfortable – if slightly less fun ★★★★★				
1.5 75 SE	£11995	74	110	-
1.5 75 SE-L	£12995	74	110	-
1.5 90 SE-L	£13995	90	105	-
1.5 90 SE-L Nav	£14395	90	105	-
1.5 90 Sport	£14395	90	105	-
1.5 90 Sport Nav	£15395	90	105	-
1.5 115 Sport Nav	£15995	113	117	-
1.5 105 SE-L	£15995	104	89	-
1.5 105 SE-L Nav	£16395	104	89	-
1.5 105 Sport	£16995	104	89	-
1.5 105 Sport Nav	£17395	104	89	-

3dr hatch Refined, well-priced family choice. Dynamically satisfying, too ★★★★★

1.5 100 SE	£16995	99	119	13
1.5 100 SE Nav	£17595	99	119	13
2.0 120 SE	£17295	118	117	17
2.0 120 SE Nav	£17895	118	117	17
2.0 120 SE-L	£18795	118	118	18
2.0 120 SE-L Nav	£19395	118	118	18
2.0 120 Sport Nav	£21915	118	118	18
2.0 165 Sport Nav	£22090	162	135	22
2.2 150 SE	£19645	148	107	23
2.2 150 SE Nav	£20245	148	107	23
2.2 150 SE-L	£21145	148	107	24
2.2 150 SE-L Nav	£21745	148	107	24
2.2 150 Sport Nav	£22545	148	107	24

6dr saloon A compelling mix of size, economy and performance. Interior a let down ★★★★★

2.0 145 SE	£19795	143	129	18
2.0 145 SE Nav	£20495	143	129	18
2.0 145 SE-L	£20795	143	129	18
2.0 145 SE-L Nav	£21495	143	129	18
2.0 165 Sport Nav	£24595	162	135	19
2.2 150 SE	£22295	148	108	21
2.2 150 SE Nav	£22995	148	108	21
2.2 150 SE-L	£23295	148	108	19
2.2 150 SE-L Nav	£23995	148	108	19
2.2 150 Sport Nav	£26395	148	108	21
2.2 175 Sport Nav	£26795	173	119	23

6dr tourer A compelling mix of size, economy and performance. Interior a let down ★★★★★

2.0 145 SE-L Nav	£22425	143	129	16
2.0 165 Sport Nav	£25395	162	135	19
2.2 150 SE Nav	£23795	148	116	21
2.2 175 Sport Nav	£27595	173	119	23
2.0 145 SE-L	£21725	143	131	16
2.2 150 SE	£23095	148	116	21
2.2 150 SE-L	£24095	148	116	19
2.2 150 SE-L Nav	£24795	148	116	19
2.2 150 Sport Nav	£27195	148	116	21

CX-5 5dr 4x4 Superb diesel engine mated to above average package ★★★★★

2.0 Skyactiv-G 165 SE-L Nav	£22995	162	139	15
2.0 Skyactiv-G 165 Sport Nav	£25395	162	139	15
2.0 Skyactiv-D 150 SE-L Nav	£24795	148	119	18
2.2 Sky-D 150 SE-L Lux Nav	£26395	148	119	20
2.2 Skyactiv-D 150 Sport Nav	£27195	148	119	20
2.2 Sky-D 150 SE-L Nav AWD	£26695	148	136	17
2.2 Sky-D 175 Sport Nav AWD	£29395	173	136	21

5dr mpv Functional seven-seater, but not unpleasant to drive. Lots of kit ★★★★★

2.0 150 Sport Venture	£20495	148	159	16
1.6 115 Sport Venture	£21895	114	138	16

MX-5 2dr open The old recipe – but done better. Lean, low-cost and pretty. As it should be ★★★★★

1.5i Sport Nav	£22445	129	139	-
1.5i SE	£18495	129	139	-
1.5i SE-L	£19245	129	139	-
1.5i SE-L Nav	£19845	129	139	-
1.5i Sport	£21845	129	139	-
2.0i SE-L	£20095	153	-	-
2.0i SE-L Nav	£20695	153	-	-
2.0i Sport	£22695	153	-	-
2.0i Sport Nav	£23295	153	-	-

MCLAREN

650S 2dr coupé Extraordinary pace and handling. The car the 12C should have been ★★★★★

3.8 V8	£195250	641	-	50
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650S SPIDER 2dr open More of the same, although noisier – and better for it ★★★★★

3.8 V8	£215250	641	-	50
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P1 2dr coupé Other-worldly. As worthy of a place in hypercar history as the F1 ★★★★★

3.8 V8	£866000	903	194	50
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MERCEDES-BENZ

A-CLASS 5dr hatch Desirability on message; ride quality seriously off-piste ★★★★★

A180 CDI SE ECO	£21965	107	92	16
A250 Engi/red by AMG 4MATIC	£30910	208	154	34
A180 SE	£20715	121	128	18
A180 Sport	£21840	121	133	18
A200 Sport	£23365	154	134	23
A200 AMG Sport	£24615	154	136	24
A45 AMG 4MATIC	£38195	208	140	34
A180 CDI SE auto	£23240	107	96	16
A180 CDI Sport	£22785	107	102	16
A180 CDI AMG Sport	£24035	107	105	16
A200 CDI Sport	£23860	134	118	20
A200 CDI AMG Sport	£25110	134	121	21
A220 CDI AMG Sport	£27760	168	115	25

B-CLASS 5dr hatch A slightly odd prospect, but practical and classy ★★★★★

B180 SE	£22500	120	129	16
B180 Sport	£22225	120	129	16
B180 AMG Line	£23520	120	129	16
B200 SE	£22575	154	130	16
B200 Sport	£23300	154	130	16

Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
B200 AMG Line	£24595	154	130	16
B180 CDI SE ECO	£22575	108	94	15
B180 CDI SE	£22575	108	108	15
B180 CDI Sport	£23170	108	108	15
B180 CDI AMG Line	£24465	108	108	15
B200 CDI SE	£23650	134	111	20
B200 CDI Sport	£24245	134	111	20
B200 CDI AMG Line	£25540	134	111	20
B220 CDI Sport	£27125	168	107	25

CLA 4dr saloon Attractive from some angles, unappealing from others. Dynamics to match ★★★★★

CLA 200 CDI AMG Sport	£29125	134	117	27
CLA 200 CDI Sport	£26925	134	117	27
CLA 250 AMG Sport 4Matic	£33405	208	154	24
CLA180 Sport	£24775	121	130	23
CLA180 AMG Sport	£26975	121	130	24
CLA45 AMG	£42270	354	161	45
CLA220 CDI Sport	£29775	168	117	28
CLA220 CDI AMG Sport	£31975	168	117	28

C-CLASS 2dr coupé Nice balance of style, usability and driver reward ★★★★★

C63 AMG Edition 507	£68495	451	280	44
C180 AMG Sport Edition	£29965	154	149	35
C220 CDI Exe SE	£31130	168	109	34
C220 CDI AMG Sport Edition	£32460	168	133	38
C250 CDI AMG Sport Edition	£33515	201	143	41

C-CLASS 4dr saloon Stellar cabin and polished drive increase appeal; engines not so good ★★★★★

C200 SE	£27270	181	123	31
C200 Sport	£29265	181	124	31
C200 AMG Line	£30890	181	128	31
C63 AMG	£59800	469	192	-
C63 AMG S	£66550	503	192	-
C200 BlueTEC SE	£28985	134	102	25
C200 BlueTEC Sport	£30980	134	102	25
C200 BlueTEC AMG Line	£32475	134	102	25
C220 BlueTEC SE	£29780	168	103	31
C220 BlueTEC Sport	£31775	168	104	31
C220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£33270	168	104	31
C250 BlueTEC SE	£32435	201	117	35
C250 BlueTEC Sport	£34430	201	117	35
C250 BlueTEC AMG Line	£35925	201	117	35
C300 BlueTEC Hybrid SE	£35045	201	94	-
C300 BlueTEC Hybrid Sport	£37040	201	94	-
C300 BlueTEC Hybrid AMG Line	£38535	201	94	-

C-CLASS 5dr estate Decent practicality and fantastic interior – but only okay to drive ★★★★★

C200 BlueTEC AMG Line	£33675	134	102	25
C200 BlueTEC SE	£30185	134	102	25
C200 BlueTEC Sport	£32180	134	102	25
C200 SE	£28470	181	128	31
C220 BlueTEC SE	£30980	168	108	31
C250 BlueTEC SE	£33635	201	117	35
C63 AMG	£61000	469	196	47
C63 AMG S	£67750	503	196	47
C200 Sport	£30465	181	128	31
C200 AMG Line	£32090	181	128	31
C220 BlueTEC Sport	£32975	168	108	31
C220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£34470	168	108	31
C250 BlueTEC Sport	£35630	201	117	35
C250 BlueTEC AMG Line	£37125	201	117	35

E-CLASS 4dr saloon A return to the old Merc qualities. Refined and relaxing ★★★★★

E300 BlueTEC Hybrid AMG Sport	£42375	204	109	43
E63 AMG S	£84110	549	232	47
E200 SE	£34340	181	138	36
E200 AMG Line	£36850	181	142	37
E250 SE	£35470	208	138	38
E250 AMG Line	£37980	208	142	39
E63 AMG	£74115	549	230	47
E300 BlueTEC Hybrid SE	£39880	204	109	43
E220 BlueTEC SE	£34270	168	120	34
E220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£36765	168	129	35
E250 CDI SE	£36820	201	129	39
E250 CDI AMG Line	£39445	201	134	40
E350 BlueTEC AMG Line	£41210	248	154	44

E-CLASS 5dr estate A return to the old Merc qualities. Refined and relaxing ★★★★★

E220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£38555	168	135	35
E220 BlueTEC SE	£36060	168	133	34
E250 AMG Line	£39770	208	147	39
E220 BlueTEC SE	£41250	201	145	40
E250 CDI SE	£38755	201	143	39
E250 SE	£37275	208	144	38
E300 BlueTEC Hybrid AMG Line	£41665	201	119	44
E300 BlueTEC Hybrid SE	£41670	201	119	44
E350 BlueTEC AMG Line	£43015	248	159	44
E63 AMG	£75905	549	234	47
E63 AMG S	£85900	582	234	47

E-CLASS 2dr coupé A return to the old Merc qualities. Refined and relaxing ★★★★★

E200 AMG Line	£38635	181	140	39
E400 AMG Line Plus	£46425	329	176	45
E3615	£36615	168	123	38
E220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£39310	168	126	39
E250 CDI BlueTEC AMG Line	£40930	201	129	43
E350 BlueTEC AMG Line	£42625	228	149	46

E-CLASS CABRIOLET 2dr open Nice cabin, but ride isn't great. Six-pot engines best ★★★★★

E200 AMG Line	£42005	181	146	42
E400 AMG Line Plus	£49795	329	185	48
E220 BlueTEC SE	£39985	168	127	41
E220 BlueTEC AMG Line	£42810	168	134	42
E250 CDI AMG Line	£44300	201	128	45
E350 BlueTEC AMG Line	£46010	228	154	48



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Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
1.6 dCi 130 Tekna	£26800	128	115	19
X-TRAIL 5dr 4x4 Sleek, Qashqai-based crossover is an easy win if you require seven seats	★★★★★			
1.6 dCi Visia 2WD	£23195	128	129	19
1.6 dCi Acenta 2WD	£24995	128	129	19
1.6 dCi Acenta 4WD	£26695	128	139	20
1.6 dCi n-tec 2WD	£27645	128	129	19
1.6 dCi n-tec 4WD	£29345	128	139	20
1.6 dCi Tekna 2WD	£29645	128	129	19
1.6 dCi Tekna 4WD	£31345	128	139	20
370Z 2dr coupé Great engine and poised handling. Lots of road noise	★★★★★			
3.7 V6 Nismo	£37585	345	248	46
3.7 V6	£27445	323	248	46
3.7 V6 GT	£32525	323	248	46
GT-R 2dr coupé A benchmark. Great drive, brutal power, sensational value	★★★★★			
3.8 V6 2014 MY	£78030	523	275	50
3.8 V6 Nismo	£125000	523	275	50
NOBLE				
M600 2dr coupé A new era for the Brit maker. Outrageous pace and handling	★★★★★			
4.4 V8	£200000	650	-	-
PEUGEOT				
ION 5dr hatch Good electric powertrain, comically expensive	★★★★★			
63	£26216	63	0	28
66 UK drive	£26216	63	0	28
108 3dr hatch Sister car to the Aygo. And distant second to most city car rivals	★★★★★			
1.0 Access	£8345	68	95	6
1.0 Active	£9595	68	95	6
1.0 Active Top	£10595	68	95	7
1.0 Active S-S	£9845	68	88	6
1.0 Active S-Top	£10845	68	88	7
1.2 VTI Allure	£11095	81	99	11
1.2 VTI Allure Top	£12095	81	99	11
1.2 VTI Feline	£11945	81	99	11
108 5dr hatch Sister car to the Aygo. And distant second to most city car rivals	★★★★★			
1.0 Access	£9995	68	95	6
1.0 Active Top	£10995	68	95	7
1.0 Active S-S	£10245	68	88	6
1.0 Active S-Top	£11245	68	88	7
1.2 VTI Allure	£11495	81	99	11
1.2 VTI Allure Top	£12495	81	99	11
1.2 VTI Feline	£12345	81	99	11
208 3dr hatch Big improvement for Peugeot, if not the supermini class	★★★★★			
1.0 VTI Access	£10195	67	99	5
1.0 VTI Access +	£11445	67	99	6
1.0 VTI Active	£12395	67	99	6
1.2 VTI Access +	£11945	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Active	£12895	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Allure	£14295	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Style	£13645	81	104	11
1.6 THP 156 XY	£18150	154	135	26
1.6 THP 200 GTi	£19100	197	139	30
1.4 HDi Access +	£13245	67	98	11
1.4 HDi Active	£14195	67	98	11
1.4 HDi Style	£14945	67	98	10
1.6 e-HDi 92 Style	£15595	91	95	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Allure	£16245	91	95	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 XY	£17895	91	95	16
1.6 e-HDi 115 XY	£18545	113	99	20
208 5dr hatch Big improvement for Peugeot, if not the supermini class	★★★★★			
1.0 VTI Access	£10795	67	99	5
1.0 VTI Access +	£12045	67	99	6
1.0 VTI Active	£12995	67	99	6
1.2 VTI Access	£13495	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Active	£12545	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Allure	£14695	81	104	8
1.2 VTI Style	£14245	81	104	11
1.6 VTI Allure auto	£16850	118	149	14
1.6 VTI Feline	£17245	118	129	14
1.4 HDi Access +	£13845	67	98	11
1.4 HDi Active	£14795	67	98	11
1.4 HDi Style	£15545	67	98	10
1.4 e-HDi Active EGC	£15495	67	87	11
1.6 e-HDi 92 Style	£16195	91	95	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Allure	£16645	91	95	17
1.6 e-HDi 115 Feline	£18695	113	99	19
308 5dr hatch Thoughtfully developed and very well appointed but still no class leader	★★★★★			
1.2 PureTech 82 Access	£14995	81	117	9
1.2 PureTech 110 Active	£17945	108	105	13
1.2 PureTech 110 Allure	£19145	108	105	13
1.2 PureTech 110 Sportium	£17445	108	105	11
1.2 PureTech 130 Active	£18695	128	107	14
1.2 PureTech 130 Allure	£19895	128	110	15
1.2 PureTech 130 GT Line	£21445	128	110	16
1.6 THP 205 GT	£24095	202	130	26
1.6 HDi 92 Access	£16945	91	93	15
1.6 HDi 92 Active	£18645	91	93	15
1.6 Blue HDi 120 Active	£19845	118	82	22
1.6 Blue HDi 120 Allure	£21045	118	84	24
1.6 HDi 115 Active	£19445	113	85	18
1.6 HDi 115 Allure	£20645	113	100	18
1.6 HDi 115 GT Line	£22195	113	100	18
2.0 Blue HDi 150 Allure	£21945	148	97	26
2.0 Blue HDi 150 GT Line	£23495	148	97	26
2.0 Blue HDi 180 GT	£25945	178	103	29
308 SW 5dr estate Thoughtfully developed and very well appointed but still no class leader	★★★★★			
1.2 PureTech 110 Access	£17145	108	109	13
1.2 PureTech 110 Active	£18845	108	109	13
1.2 PureTech 110 Allure	£20045	108	111	13
1.2 PureTech 130 Active	£19595	128	109	14
1.2 PureTech 130 Allure	£20795	128	115	15
1.6 BlueHDi 120 Active	£20745	118	85	20
1.6 BlueHDi 120 Allure	£21945	118	88	21
1.6 HDi 115 Active	£20345	113	95	18
1.6 HDi 115 Allure	£21545	113	100	18
1.6 HDi 92 Access	£17845	91	99	15
1.6 HDi 92 Active	£19545	91	99	15
1.2 PureTech 130 GT Line	£22345	128	115	16
1.6 HDi 115 GT Line	£23095	113	100	18
2.0 BlueHDi 150 Allure	£22845	148	105	24
2.0 BlueHDi 150 GT Line	£24395	148	105	24
2.0 BlueHDi 180 GT	£26845	178	107	29
508 4dr saloon Competent and likeable package, although lacks any real spark				
2.2 HDi 200 GT	£30645	201	140	37
1.6 e-HDi 115 Active Nav	£22195	113	109	24
1.6 e-HDi 115 Allure Nav	£24295	113	111	25
2.0 HDi 140 Allure Nav	£22595	140	115	27
2.0 HDi 140 Allure Nav	£24695	140	119	28
2.0 BlueHDi 150 Allure Nav	£25795	148	101	30
2.0 HDi 163 Allure Nav auto	£26595	161	140	30
2.0 HDi Hybrid4 Allure Nav	£31995	200	91	36
508 SW 5dr estate As good as saloon, only better looking	★★★★★			
1.6 e-HDi 115 Active Nav	£23395	113	110	24
1.6 e-HDi 115 Allure Nav	£25695	113	112	25
2.0 BlueHDi 150 Allure Nav	£27195	148	102	30
2.0 HDi 140 Allure Nav	£26095	140	125	28
2.0 HDi 163 Allure Nav auto	£27995	161	144	30
2.2 HDi 200 GT	£32045	201	144	37
2008 5dr hatch Efficient and well-mannered but short on space and style				
1.2 VTI 82 Access +	£13195	81	114	10
1.2 VTI 82 Active	£14295	81	114	11
1.2 VTI 82 Allure	£15595	81	114	11
1.6 VTI 120 Allure	£16750	118	135	20
1.6 VTI 120 Feline Calima	£18150	118	135	19
1.6 VTI 120 Feline Mistral S-S	£18450	118	135	19
1.4 HDi 70 Access +	£14495	67	104	10
1.4 HDi 70 Active	£15595	67	104	10
1.6 e-HDi 92 Active S-S	£16245	91	103	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Active EGC S-S	£16845	91	98	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Allure S-S	£17745	91	103	18
1.6 e-HDi 92 Feline Calima	£19145	91	103	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Feline Mistral	£19445	91	103	17
1.6 e-HDi 92 Feline S-S	£18345	113	105	20
1.6 e-HDi 115 Feline Calima SS	£19745	113	105	20
1.6 e-HDi 115 Feline Mistral S	£20045	113	105	20
3008 5dr mpv Good handling and flexible cabin. Split tailgate a useful touch	★★★★★			
2.0 HDi 163 Allure Au	£25050	161	145	23
1.6 VTI 120 Access	£17550	118	155	17
1.6 VTI 120 Active	£19250	118	155	17
1.6 VTI 120 Allure	£21200	118	155	17
1.6 THP 156 Allure	£22050	154	154	23
1.6 HDi 115 Access	£19345	113	125	18
1.6 HDi 115 Active	£20795	113	125	18
1.6 HDi 115 Allure	£22745	113	127	18
1.6 e-HDi 115 Access EGC	£20195	113	110	18
1.6 e-HDi 115 Active EGC	£22165	113	110	18
1.6 e-HDi 115 Allure EGC	£23595	113	112	17
2.0 HDi FAP 150 Active	£21900	148	139	24
2.0 HDi FAP 150 Allure	£23850	148	139	22
2.0 HDi Hybrid 4 Active	£27245	197	85	30
2.0 HDi Hybrid 4 Allure	£28245	197	99	31
5008 5dr mpv Well resolved ride and handling with a useful 7-seat interior	★★★★★			
1.6 VTI 120 Access	£19350	118	159	13
1.6 VTI 120 Active	£21100	118	159	15
1.6 THP 156 Allure	£23750	154	163	19
1.6 e-HDi 115 Access EGC	£21895	113	113	16
1.6 e-HDi 115 Active EGC	£23495	113	123	17
1.6 e-HDi 115 Allure EGC	£25295	113	126	16
1.6 HDi 115 Access	£221045	113	124	16
1.6 HDi 115 Active	£22745	113	128	17
1.6 HDi 115 Allure	£24550	113	135	16
2.0 HDi 150 Active	£23750	148	138	20
2.0 HDi 163 Active auto	£24950	161	149	20
2.0 HDi 150 Allure	£25550	148	140	20
2.0 HDi 163 Allure auto	£26750	161	149	21
RCZ 2dr coupé Classy, interesting, fun coupe. Peugeot's got its mojo back	★★★★★			
1.6 THP 156 Sport	£22350	154	149	27
1.6 THP 156 GT	£24750	154	149	28
1.6 THP 200 GT	£27150	197	155	34
1.6 THP 270 R	£32250	266	145	42
2.0 HDi 163 Sport	£24200	161	130	29
2.0 HDi 163 GT	£26600	161	130	30
PORSCHE				
BOXSTER 2dr open Honed, toned and cosmetically enhanced. Scarily brilliant	★★★★★			
2.7	£40098	261	195	40
3.4 S	£48553	311	211	43
3.4 GT5	£54567	326	211	44
CAYMAN 2dr coupé Roof seals the deal. A five-star car by any measure	★★★★★			
2.7	£40239	271	195	37
3.4 S	£49478	320	211	41
3.4 GT5	£56092	335	211	43
911 2dr coupé The best just got better. Still more than worthy of its iconic status	★★★★★			
3.4 Carrera	£74204	345	211	46
3.4 Carrera 4	£79060	345	218	46
3.8 Carrera S	£84240	395	223	47
3.8 Carrera 4S	£89325	395	233	48
3.8 Turbo	£121523	514	227	48
3.8 Turbo S	£143045	552	227	48
3.8 GT3	£101695	468	289	48
911 CARRIOLET 2dr open The best just got better. Still more than worthy of its iconic status	★★★★★			
3.4 Carrera	£82864	345	216	49
3.8 Carrera S	£93129	395	228	50
3.4 Carrera 4	£87720	345	223	49
3.4 Targa 4	£87720	345	223	49</

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Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
TOLEDO 5dr hatch Makes practical sense, but leaves no other lasting impression ★★★★★				
1.2 TSI 85 S	£14265	84	119	10
1.2 TSI 105 S	£15295	104	116	13
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£16515	104	118	14
1.4 TSI 125 SE DSG	£17965	120	134	17
1.6 TDI 105 CR SE Ecomotive	£17150	104	104	15
1.6 TDI 105 CR SE Ecomotive	£18370	104	106	15
LEON 3dr hatch Sharp looks and handling. Back from the Golf's quality, but good value ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 110 SE Ecomotive	£19625	108	87	14
1.2 TSI 110 S	£15815	108	114	13
1.2 TSI 110 SE	£16935	108	114	13
1.4 TSI 125 SE	£17535	123	120	16
1.4 TSI 150 FR	£19700	148	109	20
1.8 TSI 180 FR	£20740	178	107	25
2.0 TSI 265 Cupra	£25960	261	154	32
2.0 TSI 280 Cupra	£27210	276	154	33
1.6 TDI CR 105 S	£17515	104	99	13
1.6 TDI CR 105 SE	£18635	104	99	13
2.0 TDI CR 150 SE	£19985	148	106	19
2.0 TDI CR 150 FR	£21530	148	106	20
2.0 TDI CR 184 FR	£22520	181	109	26
LEON 5dr hatch Sharp looks and handling. Back from the Golf's quality, but good value ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 110 SE Ecomotive	£19925	108	87	14
1.2 TSI 110 S	£16115	108	114	13
1.2 TSI 110 SE	£17235	108	114	13
1.4 TSI 125 SE	£17835	123	120	16
1.4 TSI 150 FR	£20000	148	106	20
1.8 TSI 180 FR	£21040	178	107	25
2.0 TDI CR 184 FR	£22820	181	109	26
2.0 TSI 280 Cupra	£27510	276	154	33
2.0 TDI CR 105 S	£17815	104	99	13
1.6 TDI CR 105 SE	£18935	104	99	13
2.0 TDI CR 150 SE	£20285	148	106	19
2.0 TDI CR 150 FR	£21830	148	106	20
LEON 5dr estate Sharp looks and handling. Back from the Golf's quality, but good value ★★★★★				
1.2 TSI 105 S	£16675	104	114	12
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£17795	104	114	13
1.4 TSI 140 FR	£20390	138	122	18
1.4 TSI 140 SE	£18845	138	122	17
1.6 TDI 110 SE Ecomotive	£20920	108	87	14
1.6 TDI CR 105 S	£18810	104	99	13
1.6 TDI CR 105 SE	£19930	104	99	13
1.8 TSI 180 FR	£22035	178	107	25
2.0 TDI CR 150 FR	£22825	148	106	20
2.0 TDI CR 150 SE	£21280	148	106	19
2.0 TDI CR 184 FR	£23815	181	112	26
2.0 TDI 150 SE X-Perience	£24385	148	129	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE Tech X-Perience	£26370	148	129	20
2.0 TDI 184 SE Tech X-Perience	£28870	181	129	23
ALTEA 5dr hatch Short on interior flexibility and visibility. Well-judged drive ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 105 i-Tech Ecomotive	£15445	103	119	14
2.0 TDI 140 i-Tech	£16245	138	129	19
XL 1.6 TDI 105 i-Tech Ecomotive	£16165	103	119	13
2.0 TDI 140 i-Tech	£16965	138	129	19
ALHAMBRA 5dr mpv Practical, refined and good value. Not exciting ★★★★★				
2.0 TDI 140 Ecomotive S	£25630	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 Ecomotive SE	£27510	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 Ecomotive i-TECH	£28630	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 Eco SE Lux	£30900	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 177 SE	£28750	138	152	22
2.0 TDI 177 SE Lux	£32420	138	152	22
SKODA				
CITIGO 3dr hatch The VW Up in entry-level Skoda format ★★★★★				
1.0 60 S	£8275	59	105	1
1.0 60 SE	£9135	59	105	1
1.0 60 Monte Carlo	£10670	59	105	2
1.0 60 GreenTech SE	£9495	59	95	1
1.0 60 GreenTech Eleg.	£10010	59	95	1
1.75 GreenTech Eleg.	£10400	74	98	2
CITIGO 5dr hatch The VW Up in entry-level Skoda format ★★★★★				
1.0 60 S	£8625	59	105	1
1.0 60 SE	£9485	59	105	1
1.0 60 Monte Carlo	£11020	59	105	2
1.0 60 GreenTech SE	£9845	59	95	1
1.0 60 GreenTech Eleg.	£10360	59	95	1
1.75 GreenTech Eleg.	£10750	74	98	2
FABIA 5dr hatch Straight-laced for a supermini, but as likeable an all-rounder as you'll find ★★★★★				
1.0 60 S	£10600	59	106	2
1.0 75 S	£11460	74	108	4
1.0 75 SE	£12820	74	108	3
1.0 75 SE L	£13610	74	108	3
1.2 TSI 90 SE	£13450	89	107	8
1.2 TSI 90 SE L	£14240	89	107	8
1.2 TSI 110 S DSG	£13740	108	109	13
1.2 TSI 110 SE	£14100	108	110	12
1.2 TSI 110 SE L	£14890	108	110	12
1.4 TDI 90 S	£14090	89	93	12
1.4 TDI 90 SE	£15450	89	93	10
1.4 TDI 90 SE L	£16240	89	93	11
1.4 TDI 105 SE L	£16840	104	95	12
FABIA 5dr estate				
1.0 75 S	£12460	74	109	4
1.0 75 SE	£13965	74	109	3
1.0 75 SE L	£14755	74	109	3
1.2 TSI 110 S DSG	£14740	108	109	13
1.2 TSI 110 SE	£15245	108	110	12
1.2 TSI 110 SE L	£16035	108	110	12
1.2 TSI 90 SE	£14595	89	107	8
1.2 TSI 90 SE L	£15385	89	107	8
1.4 TDI 105 SE L	£17985	104	97	12
1.4 TDI 90 S	£15090	89	94	10
1.4 TDI 90 SE	£16595	89	94	10
1.4 TDI 90 SE L	£17385	89	94	11
RAPID 5dr hatch				
1.6 TDI 105 S	£17145	103	114	16
1.6 TDI 90 Eleg.	£17715	103	114	16
1.6 TDI 90 GreenLine	£17975	103	99	13
1.6 TDI 90 GreenTech Eleg.	£17965	103	104	13
1.6 TDI 90 GreenTech SE	£17215	103	104	13
1.6 TDI 90 S	£16015	103	114	13
1.6 TDI 90 SE	£16965	103	114	13
1.2 TSI 75 S	£13350	74	137	7
1.2 TSI 86 S	£14140	84	119	10
1.2 TSI 86 SE	£15090	84	119	10
1.2 TSI 86 GreenTech S	£14390	84	114	10
1.2 TSI 86 GreenTech SE	£15340	84	114	10
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£15790	104	125	13
1.2 TSI 105 Eleg.	£16540	104	125	13
1.2 TSI 105 GreenTech SE	£16040	104	118	13
1.2 TSI 105 GreenTech Eleg.	£16790	104	118	13
1.2 TSI 105 Sport	£15840	104	125	15
1.2 TSI 122 SE DSG	£17585	120	134	16
1.4 TSI 122 Eleg. DSG	£18335	120	134	16
1.4 TSI 122 GreenTech SE DSG	£17705	120	127	18
1.4 TSI 122 GreenTech Eleg.	£18455	120	127	18
1.6 TDI 105 S	£16590	103	114	16
1.6 TDI 105 SE	£17540	103	114	15
1.6 TDI 105 Eleg.	£18290	103	114	15
1.6 TDI 105 GreenTech SE	£17790	103	106	15
1.6 TDI 105 GreenTech Eleg.	£18540	103	106	15
RAPID SPACEBACK 5dr estate Estate shape makes most sense of Rapid's skinny body ★★★★★				
1.2 TSI 105 Eleg.	£16640	104	125	14
1.2 TSI 105 GreenTech Eleg.	£16890	104	118	14
1.2 TSI 105 GreenTech SE	£16430	104	118	15
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£16180	104	125	14
1.2 TSI 86 SE	£14750	84	114	12
1.2 TSI 86 GreenTech SE	£15730	84	114	12
1.2 TSI 86 S	£14500	84	119	11
1.2 TSI 86 SE	£15480	84	119	12
1.4 TSI 122 Eleg. DSG	£18445	120	134	18
1.4 TSI 122 GreenTech SE DSG	£18105	120	127	18
1.4 TSI 122 G'tech Eleg. DS	£18565	120	127	18
1.4 TSI 122 SE DSG	£17985	120	134	17
1.6 TDI 105 Eleg.	£18390	103	114	16
1.6 TDI 105 GreenTech Eleg.	£18640	103	106	16
1.6 TDI 105 GreenTech SE	£18180	103	106	16
1.6 TDI 105 S	£16950	103	114	15
1.6 TDI 105 SE	£17930	103	114	16
1.6 TDI 90 GreenLine	£17355	89	99	14
1.6 TDI 90 GreenTech Eleg.	£17990	89	106	14
1.6 TDI 90 GreenTech SE	£17530	89	106	14
1.6 TDI 90 S	£16300	89	114	13
1.6 TDI 90 SE	£17280	89	114	14
1.6 TDI 90 Eleg.	£17740	89	114	14
OCTAVIA 5dr hatch Extended wheelbase makes the Octavia an even more practical choice ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 105 SE Business	£19775	104	99	14
1.2 TSI 105 S	£16525	104	114	13
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£17875	104	114	13
1.2 TSI 140 SE	£19075	138	121	18
1.4 TSI 140 Eleg.	£20775	138	121	19
1.8 TSI 180 Laurin & Klement	£26630	178	135	25
2.0 TSI 220 vRS	£23830	217	142	29
1.6 TDI 105 S	£18575	104	99	13
1.6 TDI 105 SE	£19925	104	99	13
1.6 TDI 105 Eleg.	£21625	104	99	14
1.6 TDI 110 Greenline	£20225	108	90	19
1.6 TDI 110 SE Business GreenL	£20225	108	90	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE	£20535	148	106	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE Business	£20535	148	106	20
2.0 TDI 150 Eleg.	£22525	148	106	20
2.0 TDI 150 Laurin & Klement	£24665	148	107	22
2.0 TDI 184 vRS	£24075	181	115	26
OCTAVIA 5dr estate Extended wheelbase makes the Octavia an even more practical choice ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 105 Eleg. 4x4	£23880	104	119	14
1.6 TDI 105 SE 4x4	£22180	104	119	13
1.6 TDI 105 SE Business	£20580	104	99	13
1.6 TDI 110 Greenline	£21425	108	90	15
1.6 TDI 110 SE Business G'line	£21425	108	90	19
2.0 TDI 150 Eleg. 4x4	£24780	148	124	20
2.0 TDI 150 SE 4x4	£23185	148	120	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE Business	£21735	148	106	19
1.2 TSI 105 S	£17130	104	117	13
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£18680	104	117	13
1.4 TSI 140 SE	£19880	138	121	18
1.4 TSI 140 SE Business	£21580	138	121	19
1.8 TSI 180 Laurin & Klement	£27830	178	136	25
2.0 TSI 220 vRS	£25030	217	142	29
1.6 TDI 105 S	£19380	104	99	13
1.6 TDI 105 SE	£20730	104	99	13
1.6 TDI 105 Eleg.	£22430	104	99	14
2.0 TDI 150 SE	£21735	148	106	19
2.0 TDI 150 Scout 4x4	£25405	148	125	-
2.0 TDI 150 Eleg.	£23330	148	110	20
2.0 TDI 150 Laurin & Klement	£27665	148	107	22
2.0 TDI 150 Laurin Klement 4x4	£29115	148	122	21
2.0 TDI 184 Scout 4x4	£28200	181	129	-
2.0 TDI 184 vRS	£25275	181	117	26
ROOMSTER 5dr mpv Quirky looks, talented package, awkward image ★★★★★				
1.2 S	£12105	69	143	5
1.2 SE	£13575	69	143	6
1.2 TSI 85 S	£12750	84	134	9
1.2 TSI 85 SE	£14135	84	134	9
1.2 TSI 85 Scout	£14685	84	134	9
1.2 TSI 105 S auto	£14185	104	134	12
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£14800	104	134	12
1.2 TSI 105 Scout	£15350	104	134	12
1.2 TDI 75 Greenline II	£16325	74	109	9
1.6 TDI CR 90 SE	£15415	89	124	11
1.6 TDI CR 90 Scout	£15965	89	124	11
1.6 TDI CR 105 SE	£15640	104	124	13
1.6 TDI CR 105 Scout	£16190	104	124	13
YETI 5dr 4x4 Useful, versatile cabin. Good handling and engines ★★★★★				
1.6 TDI 105 Outdoor SE B'nes G	£19915	103	119	14
2.0 TDI 110 Outdoor SE 4WD	£21405	109	154	14
2.0 TDI 140 Outdoor SE B'nes 4	£22230	138	152	18
1.2 TSI 105 S	£16915	103	142	13
1.2 TSI 105 Outdoor S	£16915	103	142	13
1.2 TSI 105 SE	£18425	103	142	13
1.2 TSI 105 Outdoor SE	£18425	103	142	13
1.2 TSI 105 Eleg.	£20250	103	142	14
1.2 TSI 105 Outdoor Eleg.	£20250	103	142	14
1.8 TSI 160 Outdoor L&K 4WD	£25940	158	184	22
1.6 TDI 105 S GreenLine II	£18405	103	119	14
1.6 TDI 105 Outdoor S GreenLine	£18405	103	119	14

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Make and Model	Price	Bhp	CO ₂ g/km	Insurance group
1.4 TSI 150 Sport	£25115	148	138	22
2.0 TDI 110	£21040	108	115	15
2.0 TDI 110 Design	£23415	108	115	16
2.0 TDI 150 Design	£24245	148	120	23
2.0 TDI 150 Sport	£25845	148	120	23
2.0 TSI 220 Sport	£26345	217	154	29
CC 4dr saloon Loses a name and adds some flair, but never compels				
1.4 TSI 160 BMT	£25050	158	144	27
2.0 TDI 177 BMT GT	£29820	177	120	27
2.0 TSI 210 GT	£29285	208	169	29
2.0 TSI 210 R-Line	£29935	208	169	32
2.0 TDI 140 BMT	£26115	138	119	23
2.0 TDI 140 BMT GT	£27695	138	119	24
2.0 TDI 177 BMT R-Line	£30470	177	120	28
EOS 2dr cc Pleasant and predictable drive. Feeling odd now				
1.4 TSI 160 Sport	£27610	158	157	24
2.0 TSI 210 Sport	£29610	208	165	30
2.0 TDI Blue Tech Sp.	£28185	138	125	23
2.0 TDI Blue Tech Exec.	£31325	138	125	23
SCIROCCO 3dr coupé A complete coupe.				
Entertaining, practical and stylish	★★★★★			
1.4 TSI 125	£20735	123	125	22
1.4 TSI 125 GT	£22585	123	125	23
2.0 TSI 180	£22790	178	142	31
2.0 TSI 220 GT	£26125	217	142	37
2.0 TSI 220 R-Line	£28195	217	139	37
2.0 TSI 280 R	£32580	276	187	42
2.0 TDI 150	£23455	148	109	27
2.0 TDI 150 GT	£25305	148	109	28
2.0 TDI 150 R-Line	£27375	148	109	28
2.0 TDI 184 GT	£26305	181	115	31
2.0 TDI 184 R-Line	£28375	181	115	31
PASSAT 4dr saloon Supremely well-executed family-sized prospect				
1.6 TDI 120 S	£22320	118	105	15
1.6 TDI 120 SE	£23460	118	105	12
1.6 TDI 120 SE Business	£24115	118	105	12
1.6 TDI 120 GT	£25420	118	109	13
2.0 TDI 150 S	£23445	148	106	21
2.0 TDI 150 SE	£24585	148	106	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE Business	£25240	148	106	19
2.0 TDI 150 GT	£26545	148	109	19
2.0 TDI 150 R-Line	£27540	148	109	19
2.0 TDI SCR 190 GT	£27895	187	107	23
2.0 TDI SCR 190 R-Line	£28890	187	107	23
2.0 TDI 240 BITDI SCR GT	£34625	237	139	28
2.0 TDI 240 BITDI SCR R-Line	£35620	237	139	28
PASSAT 5dr estate Supremely well-executed family-sized prospect				
1.6 TDI 120 GT	£26970	118	110	13
1.6 TDI 120 S	£23870	118	107	15
1.6 TDI 120 SE	£25010	118	107	12
1.6 TDI 120 SE Business	£25665	118	107	12
2.0 TDI 150 GT	£28095	148	110	19
2.0 TDI 150 R-Line	£29090	148	110	19
2.0 TDI 150 S	£24995	148	107	21
2.0 TDI 150 SE	£26135	148	107	19
2.0 TDI 150 SE Business	£26790	148	107	19
2.0 TDI 190 SCR GT	£29445	187	110	22
2.0 TDI 190 SCR R-Line	£30440	187	110	23
2.0 TDI 240 BITDI SCR GT	£36175	237	140	28
2.0 TDI 240 BITDI SCR R-Line	£37170	237	140	28
PHAEON 4dr saloon Big VW feels old now, and struggles to justify its price				
3.0 V6 TDI 240 SWB	£55550	236	224	45
3.0 V6 TDI 240 LWB	£58110	236	224	45
TOURAN 5dr mpv Good chassis but little inspiration.				
Bland appearance	★★★★★			
2.0 TDI 177 Sport	£28500	177	150	24
1.2 TSI 105 S	£19940	104	149	12
1.4 TSI 140 SE	£23750	138	159	18
1.6 TDI 105 Blue Tech S	£21750	104	121	14
1.6 TDI 105 BlueTech SE	£23855	104	121	14
2.0 TDI 140 BlueTech SE	£25620	138	127	19
2.0 TDI 140 BlueTech Sp.	£27080	138	127	19
SHARAN 5dr mpv Refined, flexible big MPV. Seat version is cheaper				
2.0 TDI 177 SE	£30730	177	152	23
2.0 TDI 177 SEL	£33630	177	152	23
1.4 TSI 150 S	£25500	148	167	16
1.4 TSI 150 SE	£27810	148	167	16
2.0 TSI 200 SEL DSG	£33955	197	198	25
2.0 TDI 115 S	£26065	113	146	14
2.0 TDI 140 S	£26815	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 SE	£29125	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 SEL	£32025	138	146	18
2.0 TDI 140 Exec	£32275	138	146	18

AUTOCAR TOP FIVES

Luxury



1 Mercedes-Benz S-Class From £66,000
Opulent, advanced, incredibly refined: the S-Class is the classic limo, expertly realised and utterly persuasive. ★★★★★



2 Range Rover From £73,000
Whether outside the Dorchester or atop Ben Nevis, the Range shrouds you in an invincible sense of expense. ★★★★★



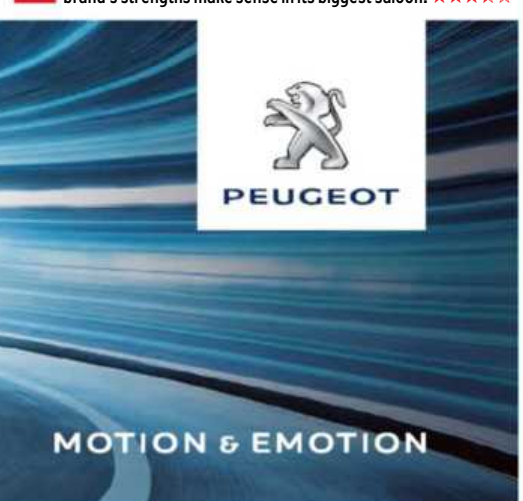
3 Tesla Model S P85D From £68,000
Superior range doesn't just make the Model S a standout electric car; it's also one of the best luxury options around. ★★★★★



4 Jaguar XJ From £56,000
No other firm is currently mixing sportiness and aloofness with the skill of Jaguar. It makes the XJ a rare blend. ★★★★★



5 Audi A8 From £53,000
Doesn't convince across the board, but there's no denying the brand's strengths make sense in its biggest saloon. ★★★★★



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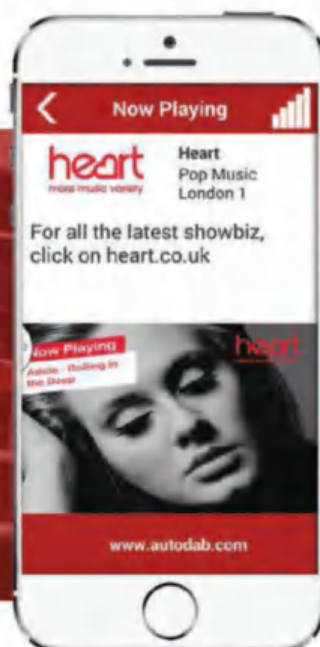
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ROAD TEST RESULTS

Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/turning	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE
EVORA 2dr coupé ★★★★★	162	5.4	13.0	4.7	8.2	2.3	276	258	27.8	24/33	1382	26.8.09
Evora 2+2	172	4.5	11.3	4.0	6.8	2.4	345	295	34.8	21/26	1430	30.3.11
EXIGE S 2dr coupé ★★★★★	170	4.1	9.6	3.7	5.5	2.5	345	295	27	21/30	1176	3.4.13
Exige S												

MASERATI												
GRANTURISMO 2dr coupé ★★★★★	177	5.6	13.0	4.9	*2.8	2.8	400	339	32.1	18/27	1975	2.2.08
4.2 GT												
GRANCABRIO 2dr open ★★★★★	175	5.1	11.9	4.5	11.2	2.4	433	362	32.1	17/22	2085	14.7.10
4.7 V8												
Ghibli 4dr saloon ★★★★★	155	6.5	17.2	6.0	5.1	2.7	271	443	43.3	31/40	1835	12.3.14
Diesel												

MAZDA												
2.5dr hatch ★★★★★	114	10.4	38.0	7.0	20.2	3.1	89	109	27.9	51/55	1050	22.4.15
1.5 Sky-V-G SE												
3.5dr hatch ★★★★★	130	9.0	26.6	9.1	9.9	3.0	148	280	29.7	46/60	1470	4.12.13
2.2 SE-L												
5.5dr MPV ★★★★★	111	12.5	-	13.4	11.1	2.9	113	199	31.3	35/40	1555	16.2.11
1.6D Sport												
6.4dr saloon/5dr estate ★★★★★	139	7.9	21.2	7.1	7.9	2.7	173	309	35	44/56	1480	23.1.13
2.2 Sport Nav												
MX-5 2dr open ★★★★★	127	8.4	24.8	7.9	14.7	3.3	129	111	24.5	46/49	1050	2.9.15
1.5 SE-L Nav												
CX-3 5dr hatch ★★★★★	110	10.3	34.7	10.3	10.3	-	104	199	34.8	59/60	1275	22.7.15
1.5D SE-L Nav												
CX-5 5dr hatch ★★★★★	126	9.4	28.0	9.1	9.7	2.3	148	280	34.9	24/55	1575	13.6.12
2.2 Sport Nav												

MCLAREN												
650S 2dr coupé/roadster ★★★★★	204	3.2	6.3	2.2	5.9	2.5	641	500	35.4	18/24	1468	30.7.13
3.8 V8 Spider												
P1 2dr coupé ★★★★★	217	2.8	5.2	2.2	6.0	2.3	903	664	36.0	19.6/-	-	7.5.14
P1												

MERCEDES-AMG												
C63 4dr saloon ★★★★★	155	4.4	9.7	3.4	7.5	2.7	469	479	38.1	19/25	1715	3.6.15
C63												
GT 2dr coupé ★★★★★	193	3.6	7.8	2.8	5.5	2.5	503	479	34.7	20/29	1715	29.7.15
S												

MERCEDES-BENZ												
A-CLASS 5dr hatch ★★★★★												
A200 CDI Sport	130	8.9	28.3	9.0	10.1	2.5	134	221	37.1	48/58	1475	7.11.12
A45 AMG	168	4.2	11.5	4.3	4.5	2.8	355	322	38.1	27/37	1555	14.8.13
B-CLASS 5dr MPV ★★★★★												
B200 CDI Sport	130	9.4	28.8	9.6	11.9	2.7	134	221	37.8	20/52	1495	29.2.12
C-CLASS 4dr ★★★★★												
C63 AMG Black	186	4.0	9.2	3.3	7.5	2.66	510	457	37.2	15/25	1775	5.9.12
NEW C-CLASS 4dr ★★★★★												
C220 Bluetec	145	8.1	22.9	8.1	11.7	2.8	168	295	42.4	41/51	1700	23.7.14
CLA 4dr coupé/5dr estate ★★★★★												
220 CDI Sport	143	8.3	23.1	8.0	4.8	2.9	168	258	37.3	44/54	1525	26.6.13
200 CDI ST S Brk134	101	29.7	9.6	11.9	3.4	134	221	33.5	53/59	1555	18.11.15	
SLK 2dr cc ★★★★★												
SLK 200	149	7.5	18.9	7.0	9.9	2.8	181	184	31.3	30/41	1485	27.7.11
E-CLASS 4dr saloon/5dr estate/2dr convertible ★★★★★												
E250 CDI auto	149	7.7	20.3	7.4	*4.4	2.9	201	367	34.8	36/42	1780	24.6.09
E350 CDI estate/4dr	155	6.9	19.2	6.9	*4.0	2.9	228	398	38.9	29/36	1995	17.2.10
E250 CGI cab	155	7.4	19.6	7.5	4.5	2.4	201	229	30.0	26/36	1745	14.4.10
CLS 4dr coupé/5dr estate ★★★★★												
350 BlueEFF.	155	6.5	16.0	5.7	*3.3	2.5	302	273	37.6	29/38	1775	13.4.11
350 CDI S Brake155	155	7.0	18.5	6.4	*3.8	2.9	261	457	39.6	36/43	1980	9.1.13
S-CLASS 4dr saloon/2dr coupé ★★★★★												
S350 Bluetec	155	7.3	19.0	6.8	*3.9	2.7	255	457	45.6	34/44	1975	16.10.13
S63 AMG coupé	155	4.5	9.6	3.4	6.8	2.7	577	664	42.8	22/25	2070	3.12.14
GLA 5dr 4x4 ★★★★★												
220 CDI SE	134	8.1	23.8	7.8	4.7	2.65	168	258	36.4	40/48	1535	14.5.14
M-CLASS 5dr 4x4 ★★★★★												
ML250	130	8.8	28.4	9.3	11.0	2.9	201	368	36.2	38/41	2310	2.5.12
GL 5dr 4x4 ★★★★★												
GL350 AMG Spt	137	8.3	24.8	8.2	5.0*	2.6	255	457	37.7	28/33	2455	24.7.13
SL 2dr convertible ★★★★★												
SL500	155	4.3	9.9	3.6	6.5	2.7	429	516	39.6	10/24	1815	8.8.12
SL63 AMG	155	4.6	10.4	3.8	8.7	2.5	518	465	34.3	17/21	2000	7.5.08
SL65 Black	200	4.2	8.5	3.0	6.0	2.5	661	737	37.4	16/22	1880	8.4.09

MG												
3.5dr hatch ★★★★★	108	11.4	41.5	11.6	19.6	2.8	105	101	22.2	37/41	1150	25.12.13
1.5 3Form Spt												
6.5dr hatch ★★★★★	120	8.8	25.8	9.2	11	2.8	158	159	28	29/37	1525	11.5.11
1.8 T												

MINI												
MINI 3dr hatch ★★★★★	146	6.9	17.1	5.9	6.7	2.5	189	221	26.4	35/54	1235	2.4.14
Cooper S												
JCW GP	150	6.6	14.9	5.2	5.6	2.4	215	192	23.6	34/45	1160	20.2.13
COUNTRYMAN 5dr hatch ★★★★★	115	11.1	-	11.5	16.1	2.6	110	199	34.8	39/43	1475	29.9.10
Cooper D All4												
COUPE 2dr coupé ★★★★★	149	7.2	17.0	6.0	6.0	2.8	208	207	23.9	33/46	1230	26.10.11
JCW												
ROADSTER 2dr convertible ★★★★★	141	8.1	19.9	7.3	8.0	2.5	182	177	23.7	33/45	1260	9.5.12
Cooper S												

MITSUBISHI												
ASX 5dr hatch ★★★★★	124	10.0	28.8	10.1	8.6	2.8	148	221	29.6	49/57	1490	21.7.10
1.8 DID 3												
OUTLANDER 5dr 4x4 ★★★★★	118	10.2	32.9	10.1	11.1	3.07	147	265	34.7	38/45	1675	27.3.13
2.2 DID GX5												
PHEV GX4h ★★★★★	106	10.0	30.5	9.5	6.2	3.0	200	245	-	44/38	1810	16.4.14
PHEV GX4h												

MORGAN												
PLUS 8 2dr convertible ★★★★★	-	4.9	11.1	4.0	8.3	3.2	390	370	36.0	24/32	1230	22.8.12
4.8 V8												
3 Wheeler ★★★★★	115	8.0	29.9	7.7	5.1	3.56	80	103	21.3	30/-	520	6.6.12
3 Wheeler												

Make and Model	Top speed	0-60mph	0-100mph	30-70mph	50-70mph	Braking 60-0mph	Power (bhp)	Torque (lb/ft)	Mph/1000rpm	Mpg test/turning	Weight (kg)	TEST DATE
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NISSAN													
MICRA 5dr hatch	★★★☆☆	105	11.6	-	12.3	18.7	3.0	79	81	22.6	45/53	1002	19.1.11
NOTE 5dr hatch	★★★★★	106	12.6	-	13.4	20.3	2.9	79	81	21.8	42/54	1036	9.10.13
PULSAR 5dr hatch	★★★★★	118	10.9	35.5	10.8	13.1	2.9	108	192	35.7	50/57	1307	12.11.14
1.5 dCi n-tec		118	10.9	35.5	10.8	13.1	2.9	108	192	35.7	50/57	1307	12.11.14
JUKE 5dr hatch	★★★★★	111	10.3	41.6	9.9	12.7	3.0	115	117	19.5	36/46	1230	3.11.10
Acenta 1.6		111	10.3	41.6	9.9	12.7	3.0	115	117	19.5	36/46	1230	3.11.10
Nismo 1.6		134	6.9	17.2	6.0	7.2	2.5	197	184	23.8	31/39	1295	22.5.13
Nismo RS		137	7.5	18.7	6.0	9.0	3.2	215	207	23.9	34/35	1341	11.3.15
LEAF 5dr hatch	★★★★★	91	10.9	-	11.4	7.3	2.8	107	207	8.76	320Wh/m	1545	27.4.11
Leaf		91	10.9	-	11.4	7.3	2.8	107	207	8.76	320Wh/m	1545	27.4.11
QASHQAI 5dr hatch	★★★★★	113	10.8	39.2	11.1	12.9	2.9	109	192	35.0	49/56	1365	19.2.14
1.5 dCi 2WD		113	10.8	39.2	11.1	12.9	2.9	109	192	35.0	49/56	1365	19.2.14
X-TRAIL 5dr hatch	★★★★★	117	11.2	39.7	11.7	11.2	3.0	128	236	32.8	42/48	1550	13.8.14
1.6 dCi 2WD		117	11.2	39.7	11.7	11.2	3.0	128	236	32.8	42/48	1550	13.8.14
370Z	★★★★★	155	5.4	12.8	4.7	9.9	2.4	326	270	30.5	26/34	1508	29.7.09
GT-R 2dr coupé	★★★★★	155	5.4	12.8	4.7	9.9	2.4	326	270	30.5	26/34	1508	29.7.09
Black Edition		193	3.8	8.5	3.6	5.3	2.5	478	434	28.1	19/28	1775	6.5.09



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Autocar is a member of the organising committee of Car of the Year

ADDRESS

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MATT BURT

Rear View Mirror: tales from our archive

Mazda RX-7 road test

24 November 1979



Autocar kicked off its road test of the Mazda RX-7 by proclaiming the model "the Wankel's lonely champion", with the manufacturer remaining the standard-bearer for rotary engines in road cars.

The front-engined, rear-wheel-drive sports coupé was first seen in March 1978, and this magazine got its hands on one near the end of the following year, in line with its UK launch.

Mazda wasn't having too many difficulties in selling the car in left-hand-drive form. In the 17 months up to the British launch, more than 90,000 cars had been sold, and production was running at around 7000 cars per week.

Produced by Toyo Kogyo, as Mazda's parent company was then called, the RX-7 was imported to the UK by Mazda Car Imports (GB) Ltd in Tunbridge Wells and sold for £8549 in the UK – a comparatively steep price compared with its US tag of \$7195, which worked out at £3564.

Company chairman Kenichi Yamamoto was a passionate believer in the Wankel engine and the benefits it could bring to Mazda by differentiating it from its rivals. However, such dedication had been tempered with a more pragmatic approach, borne out of near-bankruptcy in the early 1970s, and Mazda had bolstered its range with cars using more conventional engines.

'Mazda claims to have improved on the Wankel's other great failing, fuel economy – but to what extent remains arguable'

As Autocar put it: "The company has apparently persevered and flourished because of a blend of piston-engined caution and Wankel-engined enterprise.

"The enterprise has been sensibly aimed. The Wankel is not noted for good low-speed power, so they put their new-generation rotary in a sports car, where bottom-end power, though still very desirable, is not essential."

Power for the RX-7 came from a twin-rotor engine that offered four times its single-rotor displacement (573cc) to give an effective 2292cc capacity. It produced a claimed 105bhp at 6000rpm and 106lb ft torque at 4000rpm.

Autocar reckoned the RX-7 was aimed squarely at the Porsche 924, with other rivals including the BMW 323i, Lotus Eclat 523, Ford Capri 3000S and Triumph TR7.

"Mazda claims to have improved on

the Wankel's other great failing, poor fuel consumption – but to what extent remains arguable. Our tests show that in both steady-speed and general respects the car is thirstier than its rivals, but again, economy is less important in the sporting market," our testers wrote.

The RX-7 won favour for its attractive shape. "The body, greatly admired by most onlookers for its apparently good aerodynamics (Mazda claims a 0.36 drag coefficient) and – unusual for a Japanese car – exemplary lack of unnecessary ornamentation, sits on an independent front end – MacPherson strut – and a live-axle rear," said Autocar.

Less impressive was the car's outright performance. The RX-7 recorded a top speed of 113mph but was left trailing its rivals in the 0-60mph acceleration test. Whereas the fastest car, the Lotus Eclat, set a time of 7.9sec, the RX-7 took 10.1sec.

It didn't cover itself in glory in terms of fuel economy, either, recording 18.2mpg by Autocar's reckoning, compared with the 27.8mpg of the most fuel-efficient rival, the Porsche 924.

"The Mazda appeals strongly to many people with its looks and holds the road well, but it could do with better steering. The question mark over its engine is today a faint one, but one wishes that its mechanical refinement was matched by better sound reduction," was Autocar's conclusion.

Got an opinion? Email us at autocar@haymarket.com

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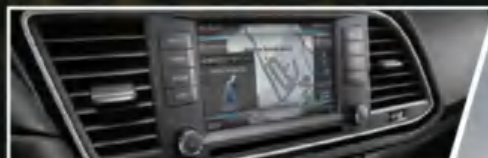
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